Embodied Forest

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Fall 2021

ecoartspace

***Embodied Forest* is dedicated to Amy Lipton (1956–2020), former east coast curator and director of ecoartspace NY from 1999–2019. Amy's love of trees was a powerful inspiration in her career curating art and ecology exhibitions.**

Chrysanne Stathacos,
Amy Lipton Aura, 1999;
courtesy Kadence Neill

"As someone ecologically minded, Amy saw connections but as a curator she acted in an ecological and ethical manner, making connections between people, systems, weather and wild creatures."
—E.J. McAdams

Mother Tree Elegy, For Amy Lipton
by E.J. McAdams

Consider a forest:
each tree transforms
sunlight into sugar.

Consider a forest:
each tree connects through
mycorrhizal threads

sapling to standing tree
sharing carbon and nutrients.
Often, at the center, there is

what scientists call a "mother tree"
a towering giant source
sinking resources sufficient

for the benefit of kin,
seedlings, injured older trees,
the shaded, and severely stressed.

No scientist has the technology (yet)
to say what it is like to be in
cooperation like this and what it feels

like to lose the mother tree in a forest,
any forest, even a forest of artists.
The scientist simply makes field notes:

When a tree dies, the trees still live.
When a tree dies, the trees still live.
When a tree dies, the trees still live.

Juror Statement

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Coexistence

—

Lilian Fraiji

To understand our place within nature as part of the whole is an eminently social and existential matter. The environmental crisis and the frequency of natural disasters we have experienced last decades, including the pandemic tragedy, which in essence was caused by an ecological imbalance, indicates the urgency for a different logic of conceiving, interacting and projecting the natural world. The artistic community and its ability to expand the social mind have an essential role in creating a new value system concerning the environment, which breaks through modern anthropocentrism and the antagonism between nature and culture.

Coexisting, interacting and exchanging energy with other organisms and natural phenomena is the basis for developing the artistic works presented in *Embodied Forest*. From the sensitive to the rational, these works contain an effervescence of processes, poetic materials and techniques that reframe Forest in a set of plural languages. These cultural processes unfold nature by using knowledge and poetic freedom to help understand ecology in the Anthropocene and generate new sensibilities to an ethical relation to nature.

The plurality of ideas, discourse and processes presented here results from a profound experience with the environment where the artist is the subject, who reproduces the landscape and is also produced by it, in a movement of interaction and reciprocity. Within this context, landscape-based conceptual art has a new layer of meaning. In the expanded field of the rainforest, one must comprehend the landscape as a product of interactions and exchanges of energy between beings and phenomena on many levels. From this perspective, we appreciate and integrate the knowledge of the environmental sciences, where the landscape is a product of the relationships that occur within it, demanding a universalization of the subject.

Through ecological science, the landscape begins to be grasped from the perspective of living beings in an empathetic imagination exercise. When you put yourself in an organism's shoes to comprehend your relationship with the environment, your understanding of this space is transformed and your perception of scale is amplified. As we become aware of an ecosystem's different dynamics and interactions, we can understand how the microorganisms silently shape the macroenvironment in an infinite chain of webs.

Artistic, linguistic constructions concerning the Forest follow a methodology that blends experience in the land, scientific and ancestral knowledge, and the artistic potential of arousing new discourses. Some works are remarkably engaged in denouncing the extinction of life, while others emphasize the artists' sensorial perception and affective processes. Some depict the dynamics of organisms in their complexity. There is a concern for giving new meaning to the landscape while dissolving the subject's place, and there is also the desire to give visibility to invisible natural phenomena.

The proximity to the plant kingdom allows the artists to experience another dimension of time. A time marked by fluid mutation processes whose rhythm and duration obey the biological growth of organisms is entirely different from the contemporary Great Acceleration. Artists initially come to understand their bodies as biological organisms, which leads them to perceive and revere the other depths of time of all living forms.

Within the artistic investigations, care is taken to extend the human condition to nonhumans, recognizing them as co-creators of the world. This perception of nature is opposed to the traditional aesthetic view and the dichotomy between subject and object, whereby nature is absorbed by the artist and transformed into their object. With the proximity between nature and culture, artists are interested in how living organisms are subjects in constructing landscapes, changing and shaping the space in which they coexist.

In light of the environmental crisis, art is an essential vehicle for questioning and imagining life's destiny. Speculating about the planet's future sheds light on humans as a geophysical force and the limiting conditions of their existence. From this perspective, the artist explores the material circumstances that subtly replace a life and transform natural resources into virtual, hybrid and artificial commodities.

Embodied Forest teaches us that life plurality is a strategy of resilience for a natural environment. That is an important characteristic as a vital and existential capability for human nature. A lack of plurality, both in culture and landscape, leaves us less resilient and less able to find solutions for the inevitable changes that lay ahead of us and the climatic changes we are already experiencing. When there is an international policy to reduce Forest worldwide, *Embodied Forest* is a multisensorial attempt to reveal what we are losing when a single tree falls.

Lilian Fraiji is a curator, a producer and an environment activist based in the Amazon, Brazil. She is specialist in Cultural Management from Barcelona University and has a Master's degree in Curating Arts from the University of Ramon Llull, Barcelona. She is the co-founder and cura-tor of LABVERDE program, a platform dedicated to development of multidisciplinary contents involving art, science, traditional knowledge and ecology. As an independent researcher, she is interested in how culture is related to nature and how landscape is shaped in the Antropocene. She has curated several art exhibitions involving Nature, including *Invisible Landscape* (Stand4 Gallery–NYC–2018), *Irreversível* (Paiol da Cultura/ INPA, Manaus 2019) and *How to talk with trees* (Galeria Z42–Rio de Janeiro–2019). She's also been the guest curator for Rock in Rio Am-azon and for the open call of Natura Music Prize Brazil in 2020. Currently she is grantee of Ser-rapilheira Program, is the curator of the online Festival called *Tomorrow is Now*, curator of online exhibition *Embodied by Forest* (ecoartspace USA) and is collaborating with Sonic Mat-ter: The Witness (Swiss) and The International Week of Music of São Paulo.

Tree Talk: Artists Speak for Trees

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Sant Khalsa

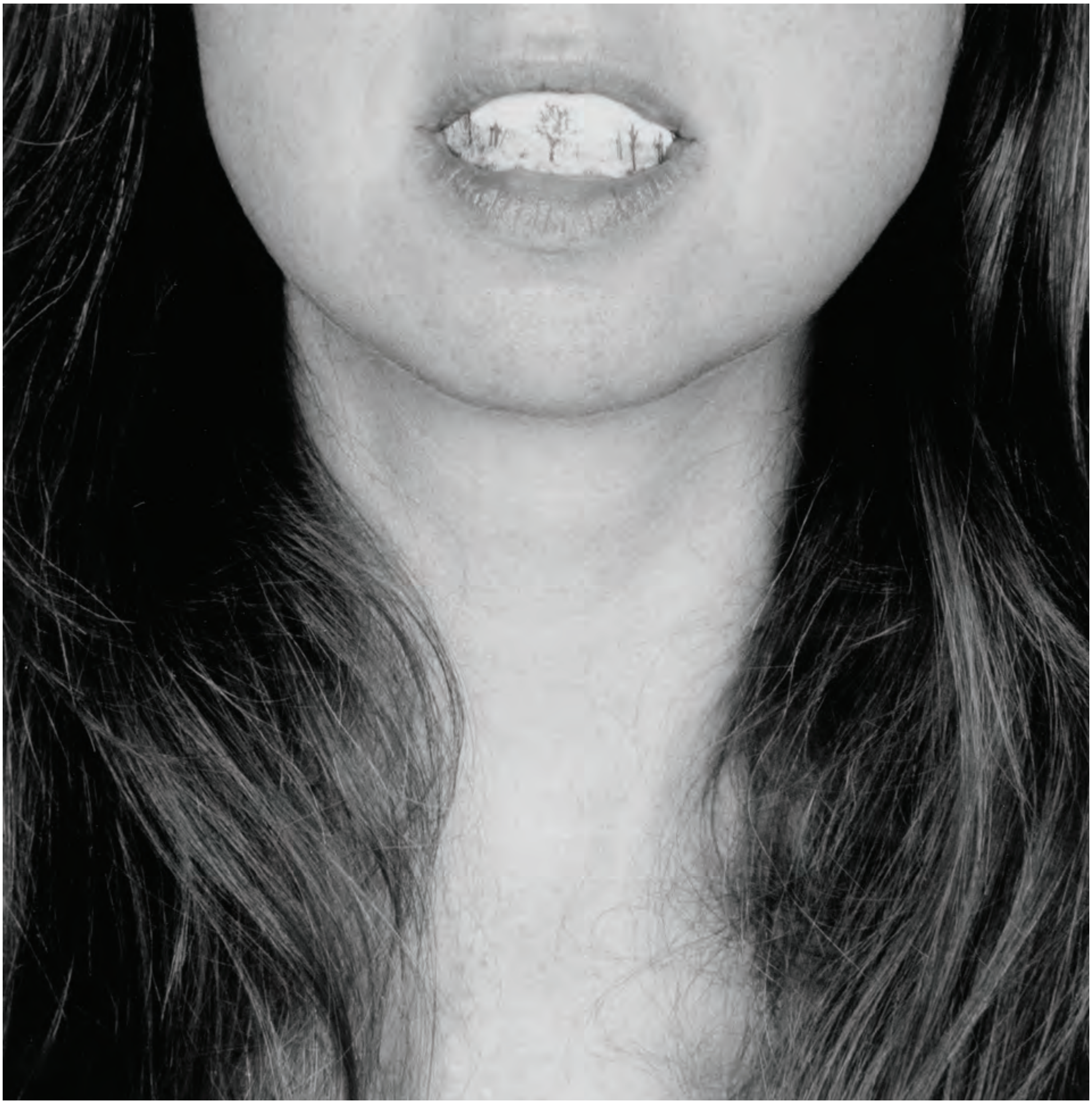
Trees have long been a subject for artists, depicted for their aesthetic beauty of form, color, light and shadow, representing the cycle of birth, life, death, and renewal. The tree has held a dominant role in the storytelling of mythology and folklore, the sacred and profane, history and memory, and our human relationship with the natural world. It serves as a visual metaphor for growth and family and a realistic indicator of the health of our planet. Historically, the "tree of life" symbolized the universe through its underworld roots, earth bond trunk, and heavenly crown.

With perfection, trees store and transform carbon dioxide into the gift of oxygen and hold and filter water, required for balanced ecosystems and the survival of humans and non-human nature. We have begun to understand the complex systems of the forest community, communication, and shared resources. Yet, there are still mysteries to discover, comprehend, and learn from these most essential and extraordinary beings.

Sadly, nearly 50 percent of the Earth's forests have been destroyed by human activities (timber industry, industrial farming including meat production, development, and more). Climate change is increasing their demise with drought, illness and insect infestation, and devastating wildfires. Heroic efforts to plant billions of trees and preserve forests have been taken on by individuals and organizations worldwide to restore the breath of life to our planet and hopefully curtail climate change.

For environmental and eco artists, trees and forests' current state and future are a focus for creative research and production. On June 12, 2020, Patricia Watts moderated "The Great Pause Dialogues: Trees," which featured ecoartspace members Ruth Wallen, Marietta Leis, Catherine Ruane, David Burns, and myself, each presenting our relationships with trees and related art practice and projects. The program was well-received, and it became apparent that there are many outstanding member artists doing significant works about trees and forests. Together, Patricia and I developed the idea for the monthly program, "Tree Talk: Artists Speak for Trees," which since July 2020 has featured emerging and established artists and guest scientists, writers, and activists, each presenting their diverse work, ideas, and perspectives.

It is an enormous honor to curate and host Tree Talk. I have come to know and learn from an exceptional group of artists working in a wide range of media (including painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, installation, photography, video, performance, public art, community practice, book art, digital and



Sant Khalsa, *Vishuddha (Self Portrait)*, 1994; gelatin silver print, 20 x 20 inches electronic media). Guest speakers whose groundbreaking research and activities inform and encourage us to think anew about trees and their environments. Though the commonality is trees, the specific topics of interest and research, scientific and artistic approaches and individual findings and interpretations vary significantly. Through their work, the presenters express their connection with trees, bring awareness to critical issues, and inspire us to be mindful of our fragile and interdependent bond with trees. Each presentation is as distinct as a tree. The topics discussed in Tree Talk include anatomy of trees and forests; personal, urban, and wildland forests; fire ecology and wildfires; the timber industry and clearcutting; inhabitants of forests; tree illnesses and diseases; the underground world of mycorrhizal networks; rights of trees; indigenous knowledge; forest activism; forest as meditation and spiritual site; conservation and restoration; forest as research lab and artist studio; and so much more.

Tree Talk has stimulated a rich and inspiring dialogue, which has generated additional ecoartspace programs and engagement in broader environmental networks. Foremost has been the creation of the *Embodied Forest* exhibition and book. Also, Patricia Watts initiated a book group that has read and discussed three books to date: *The Song of Trees* by David George Haskell, *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard, and *Entangled Life* by Merlin Sheldrake. Haskell joined ecoartspace for a special online Earth Day 2021 program. Over the summer, twelve ecoartspace members enrolled in the "Guardians of the Forest" immersive online course in somatic, spiritual, and practical approaches to forest care with practitioners from thirty nations worldwide. New individual and collaborative ventures with member artists and scientists have begun, including an exhibition and book project that evolved from the August 2020 Tree Talk on the endangered and iconic Joshua tree.

Beginning August 2021, the monthly Tree Talk online event features artists included in *Embodied Forest*. Stimulating conversations continue with these talented artists sharing their meaningful practice, ideas, and work dedicated to trees and their habitats.

Sant Khalsa is an ecofeminist artist, educator, curator, and activist whose photography, mixed media, and installation works are widely exhibited, published, and collected by museums including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, and Nevada Museum of Art. She was awarded fellowships and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, California Arts Council, California Humanities, and others. The monograph *Sant Khalsa: Prana—Life with Trees* (Griffith Moon / MOAH Lancaster, 2019) is an in-depth survey of her intimate connection with trees. Khalsa is a Professor of Art, Emerita at California State University, San Bernardino and resides in Joshua Tree, California.

Tree Talk Artists
July 2020–June 2021

Kim Abeles
Shannon Amidon
Marthe Aponte
Freyja Bardell
David Paul Bayles
Tony Bellaver
Diane Best
Fred Brashear, Jr.
Casey Lance Brown
Narelle Carter-Quinlan
Pamela Casper
Matthew David Crowther
Jeanne Dunn
Dana Fritz
Melinda Hurst Frye
Bia Gayotto
Reiko Goto
Helen Glazer
Tracy Taylor Grubbs
Jennifer Gunlock
Jennifer Hand
Juniper Harrower, Ph.D.
Cynthia Hooper
Kristin Jones
Marie-Luise Klotz
Joshua Kochis
Laurie Lambrecht
Jill Lear
Christopher Lin
Nikki Lindt
Linda MacDonald
Chris Manfield
Aline Mare
Carolyn Monastra
Erika Osborn
Pamela Pauline
Cindy Rinne
Rita Robillard
Stuart Rome
Greg Rose
Louise Russell
Miranda Whall
Leah Wilson
Marion Wilson
Adam Wolpert

April 22, 2021 Earth Day for Trees
Breath Taking exhibition at the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe; curated by Katherine Ware

Meridel Rubenstein
Linda Alterwitz
Marietta Patricia Leis
Sant Khalsa

Invited Guests

Chris Clarke,
California Desert Associate Director
of the National Park Conservation Association

Lindsey Rustad, Ph.D.,
Research Ecologist for the USDA Forest Service in Durham, NH, Co-Director of the USDA Northeastern Hub for Risk Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change, and Team Leader for the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest in NH

Frederick J. Swanson, Ph.D.,
Retired Research Geologist with the U.S. Forest Service and Emeritus Faculty, Department of Forest Ecosystems & Society at Oregon State University

Guardians of the Forest

Marthe Aponte
Freyja Bardell
Evegenia Emets
Mary Farmilant
Sant Khalsa
Nicole Kutz
Ana MacArthur
Aviva Rahmani
Stuart Rome
Catherine Ruane
Ginny Stearns
Patricia Watts

Forest Organizations & Collaboratives

Jatun Risba — Becoming Tree
Evgenia Emets — Eternal Forest
Kathleen Brigidina — Tree Sisters

Introduction

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Embodied Forest

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Patricia Watts

January 2021, Reserva de la Biósfera Santuario Mariposa Monarca, Michoacán Mountains, Mexico. Photo: Anna Marie Garrett

Embodied Forest was inspired by the incredible loss that was felt in the summer of 2020 when almost ten million acres with billions of trees burned in the wildfires in North America. These fires were preceded by over fifty million acres that burned in the Amazon, Siberia, and Australia the year before. As we were experiencing a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, we also were taking in the devastating loss of some of the oldest living beings on the planet. The past year and a half have been a real eye-opener. It is undeniable that all life, including plants, animals, and humans, are currently succumbing to a significant die-off.

Since early rock art, humans have continually portrayed trees and forests as symbols of life. At the beginning of the 20th-century, trees were depicted in magical and majestic forms by Gustave Klimt (*Birch Forest I*, 1902), Piet Mondrian (*Gray Tree*, 1911), Joseph Stella (*The Tree of my Life*, 1919), Georgia O'Keeffe (*D.H. Lawrence's Tree*, Kiowa Ranch, 1929), and Maxfield Parrish (*Good Fishing*, 1945) and by many other significant artists. Last year, during the pandemic, Christie's auction house in London sold a famous tree motif painting by Rene Magritte titled *L'arc de triomphe*, from 1962, for 24 million US dollars, almost double the high estimate. The same painting was last sold in 1992 in New York for $1.1 million.

In Capitalist terms, what is the monetary value of a tree? That depends on what type of tree, its location, and if the person who owns the land is willing to sell it. The value of trees is typically not reflected in the price of land for sale here on Turtle Island, as most states consider trees personal property. A tree's value is determined when it is chopped down and sold. Opposingly, in Indigenous cultures, trees are living beings, like human relatives. If you cut down a tree, you are, in essence, taking the life of a community member. When we destroy trees, we are destroying ourselves. We cannot survive in a treeless world.

Popular books published over the last decade have enchanted and educated us on the importance of trees, including *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohllenben, *The Overstory* by Richard Powers, *The Songs of Trees* by David George Haskell, and this year Dr. Suzanne Simard's *Finding the Mother Tree*. The most recent book By Dr. Simard outlines how trees and plants in a forest are entangled in a web of underground mycorrhizal fungal networks that enable mutal benefits such as sharing and exchanging carbon, nutrients, and water.

Contemporary artists who have made trees their subject since the 1960s include Robert Smithson, Joseph Beuys, Ana Mendieta, Giuseppe

Penone, Roxy Paine, Rona Pondick, Sam Durant, Anya Gallaccio, Ernesto Neto, Alan Sonfist, Judy Chicago, Nils Udo, Chris Drury, David Nash, Charles Gaines, and Diana Thater. In 2008, ecoartspace curator Amy Lipton curated *Into the Trees* at The Fields Sculpture Park at Omi International Art Center, Ghent, New York, including site-specific works by Polly Apfelbaum, Sanford Biggers, Elizabeth Demaray, Nina Katchadourian, Katie Holten, Jason Middlebrook, Alan Michelson and others. This spring, Maya Lin joined the list of well-known artists concerned about trees. Her installation titled *Ghost Forest* included forty-nine Atlantic white cedars transported from New Jersey to Madison Square Park in lower Manhattan. Ai Weiwei's *Pequi Tree (Pequi Vinagreiro)*, a 100-feet high iron sculpture made in China of the endangered Brazilian tree was sited this summer in Porto, Portugal. Whether it's paintings or sculptures, performance-based works, or social sculpture, the topic of trees in art and many other ecological concerns has grown exponentially.

Several of the artists included in *Embodied Forest* are dedicated to documenting and representing trees and forests in their art practice; some have recently come to the subject. One hundred and ninety-one ecoartspace members applied to the call for artists, and ninety were selected by guest juror Lilian Fraiji, curator of LABVERDE based in Manaus, Brazil. The majority of the artworks submitted were paintings, then photography and installation. Following were video and sculpture. Drawings, performance, sound and poetry were less. During the selection process, it was noted that works submitted from the UK and Europe were more research-based and that works from the United States were more object-oriented. Many of the submissions from South America were sensorial.

Countries represented by seventeen of the *Embodied Forest* artists outside the United States include Brazil, England, Sweden, Australia, Belgium, and Germany. The range of topics addressed is vast, including insects, breath, wildfires, birds, fungi, logging, growth rings, transpiration, mycorrhizal networks, canopy shyness, the cellular tissue of trees, forest immersion, reciprocity, trees as memories, rights of nature, trees as witnesses of history, colonial and capitalist extraction/white supremacy, the sonification of trees, symbiotic relationships, trees as bioindicators, tree as medicines, conservation and restoration, beetle infestations, migrations of tree habitat, Indigenous knowledge, and cultural burns.

Can our love for trees and visual communications in the form of art save what remains? The statistics are staggering considering what we've lost in the last century. More recently, we are seeing significant coordinated efforts by groups such as the Fairy Creek Blockade in British Columbia, guarding the old-growth remains. In Tasmania, Australia, the Bob Brown Foundation is supporting efforts to protect the last undisturbed tracts of Gondwanan rainforest in Takayna/Tarkine. Brazil is currently in the process of examining 237 Indigenous lands for demarcation with the threat of government authority denying Indigenous people their traditional territories, this could open up protected areas to predatory companies for extraction.

The global pandemic of 2020 has connected us profoundly through greater awareness of how we are all linked in complex webs of ecological interconnectedness. When those webs are broken, our chances for survival diminish. ecoartspace seeks to give voice to artists addressing the environmental issues we currently face, inspiring and educating the masses of the living beings, including air, soil, trees, and water that we depend on and need to strategically protect as community scientists and stewards. The artists' role is to make the invisible visible, which the works in *Embodied Forest* seek to do. The more people who engage with artworks that inspire and activate how humans choose to interact with the natural world, the larger the groundswell will evolve to alter and reverse the human impacts currently threatening our existence.

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Patricia Watts is the founder of ecoartspace, which she launched as a global membership platform for artists addressing environmental issues in 2020. From 1999 to 2019, ecoartspace operated as a bi-coastal nonprofit with Amy Lipton (1956–2020). Watts has curated over thirty art and ecology exhibitions, including *Performative Ecologies* (2020), *Contemplating OTHER* (2018), *Enchantment* (2016), *FiberSHED* (2015), *Shifting Baselines* (2013), *MAKE:CRAFT* (2010), and *Hybrid Fields* (2006). She has interviewed thirty pioneering ecological artists for the ecoartspace archive and has written Action Guides of replicable social practice projects. Watts has a visionary entrepreneurial approach to curating that supports transdisciplinary and transformative collaborative environments.

Video

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Julia Adzuki
(Sörmland, Sweden)

***IT*, 2021**
video (5:07)

How do we practice the rites and rights of nature? How do we sense the sentience of trees and forests? I am particularly concerned with old-growth deforestation and the mistreatment of trees and forests as human resources. I am exploring relationships with trees and forests as sentient beings through performative practices with tactile sound, somatic and sonic practices, spoken word and lament, both in living forests and in the aftermath of logging. In grappling with the language problems of recognizing trees and forests and sentient *IT*, takes to task this objectifying pronoun, introducing instead the pronouns ki/kin as proposed by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

juliaadzuki.com

Kaitlin Bryson
(California, United States)

***Trans[re]lations*, 2020**
site installation, UCLA Botanical Garden, Los Angeles and video (9:43)

Collaborative work created with Matea Friend, with sound by Ian Nelson

This multi-media installation makes visible and audible the interspecies conversations happening electrochemically between trees and mycorrhizal fungi. The complex woven network of mycelium transmits signals through electrical pulses to convey information and nutrients to their host plant species. We created this artwork to translate these vital relationships to the human scale in order to create an embodied experience, fostering awe and multi-species kinship. A large-scale weaving was created between a community of deciduous trees representing the mycorrhizal network. The weaving was illuminated with pulsing, generative animations and light at night—a speculative take at what signals might look like. Further, the original sound was scored with an analog synthesizer to facilitate an immersive and embodied electric experience.

kaitlinbryson.com

Sara Ekholm Eriksson
(Stockholm, Sweden)

***Årsringar (Growth Rings)*, 2019–2020**
video projection, Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm

***Förstenat trä (Petrified Wood)*, 2019–2020**
petrified wood, carved wood table, Accelerator, Stockholm

I work with trees as a method to understand time, history, and the future. Trees can be in many different states; living, dead, petrified. *Growth Rings* was shown at the Swedish Museum of Natural History and *Petrified Wood* at the art center Accelerator. The institutions are near each other, although they have different visitors. The former was a projection on the Museums' Sequoia tree section, reflecting the environmental history of the Sequoias' lifetime. When the Sequoia fell in a storm in 1940 in California, it was 2,400 years. The latter consisted of six petrified wood pieces borrowed from the Swedish Museum of Natural History archive from Sweden, Svalbard, China, and Brazil. The oldest was up to 210 million years in age. Wood petrifies when covered by mud and earth for a long time. Piece by piece, it turns into fossil. As a species having existed long before humans, trees can teach and reveal time for us.

saraekholmeriksson.com

Nathalia Favaro
(São Paulo, Brazil)

***Intervalo*, 2019**
Brazil, video (4:00)

In an attempt to experience a space in constant action and transformation, almost unidentifiable as the Amazon Rainforest, the work suggests, from the variation and intensity of light, the discovery of a place that we do not fully understand. In the Amazon Forest, as it is a closed forest, we hardly see the light coming in, and consequently, we do not perceive the nuances of shadows. Intervalo is a video record of walking through the Adolfo Ducke Reserve, with a blank sheet of paper in my hands, trying to reveal the space in between things, an area that is light and shadow and only exists in this context, over a period of time. It was developed during the Labverde Artistic Residency in the Amazon Rainforest in Manaus, Brazil.

nathaliafavaro.com

Colin Ives
(Oregon, United States)

***Branch*, 2021**
two-channel video installation (6:48) (6:56)

I pick up a branch fallen from a sweetgum tree. It teems with lifeforms. Yet I can't possibly take in the tree's fullness as place, nor its endurance as time. I carry the branch into my studio. Lights, camera. Calibrations. Slowly, the branch becomes footage, then data. I train it "epoch after epoch," as it's called in coding. The AI diverges; free from depiction, it presses forth, eddies back. The movement correlates with growth—an opening up, generation on generation. In the final two-channel installation, the natural intelligence of the tree and the algorithm's artificial intelligence play side by side, a parallax that won't resolve. Are they two points in a timeline? Levels of presence? Parallel universes? This installation engages the nature of seeing, affiliating the process of observation with the branch's temporal and spatial unfolding. The full scope of a tree—not reached, but felt, on the edge of perception.

colinives.com

Milda Lembertaitė
(London, United Kingdom)

***Why Do I See What I Do Not See*, 2019**
video stills, two-channel video (14:10)

By weaving together objects natural and technological, and drawing from histories personal, collective, and geological, my work blurs the boundary between experiences human and non-human and asks: How might we remember from where it is we came? Binding the diverse conceptual and emotional elements together is a practical emphasis upon materiality, chance, and co-creation. In 2015, a falling tree branch, narrowly missing my head, became a new conversational partner with whom I collaborate to give rise to sculptural work. The bark peeled and their many knots exposed as eyes standing unsteadily on their many awkward limbs. The branch works resulting from these chance encounters evoke the powerful relationships between touching and seeing and being touched and being seen. Held aloft by one of the branch's many arms, a smooth black obsidian stone reveals an etched message, "Do not touch me on your phone."

mildalembertaite.com

Walter Lewis
(Yorkshire, United Kingdom)

Tree Lines 2020–2021
an anthology of soundscaped visual poems, videos, various lengths

I am a photographer creating an anthology of soundscaped visual poems that reflect on, and engage with, the phenomenological encounter with trees. I aim to explore the emotive and embodied experience of engaging with the non-human and their ecological presence. My poems are audio-visual sequences and are created out of visits to wooded sites spanning time and place. The soundscapes are created in collaboration with contemporary musicians. The number of poems is not pre-determined. A forest is somewhere which grows organically, so similarly, the project will forever grow. My ambition is that the work forms a virtual forest through which viewers can wander, share my experience, and find their unique meditative encounter.

spiritoftheland.co.uk

Renata Padovan
(São Paulo, Brazil)

***Of Cattle, Forests and Men*, 2019**
video (12:31)

Through my work, I create poetic communication channels, bringing light to issues related to land occupation and their political, social, and cultural results. Recently, most of my work has been based upon research pertaining to the devastation of ecosystems and their socio-economic consequences. Since 2012 I've been traveling regularly to the Amazon, learning from local people, and researching land occupation and deforestation. I've created works related to illegal timber extraction and farming, illegal gold prospecting, and the construction of hydroelectric power plants such as Balbina in the state of Amazonas. Also, Belo Monte, in Para, was responsible for flooding large areas of forest, for the complete alteration of river courses and systems, and the dislocation of traditional communities who lost their land, their history, and their dignity. To produce my work, I use different media, including drawing, photography, sculpture, site interventions, video, chosen specifically to meet the requirements of each project.

renatapadovan.art

Perdita Phillips
(Fremantle/Walyalup, Western Australia)

***Wattie*, 2018**
looped video, Wattie (Taxandria juniperina)
at Tjurltgellong (Lake Seppings), Albany,
Western Australia

Sensing soundscapes is an embodied practice of attunement that can decentre settler cultures. Wattie (Taxandria juniperina) are thin spindly trees that live in watery landscapes. These trees live in single age stands at Tjuirtgellong (Lake Seppings) in Albany/Kinjarling, a rural city in Western Australia on Menang Noongar Boodja. *Wattie* shows crown shyness as each tree weaves its own space facing the sun. They use their strength in numbers to deflect southerly storms. This short meditation on trees is part of the Follow the water project (2018–2021). Once extensive, the Wattie thickets were sponge landscapes that sucked up water over winter and let it slowly seep out over the dry summers of a Mediterranean climate. Please consider the response from Wattie to clearing and habitat loss, water level changes, and climate change: creaks, sighs, and the calls of Grey Fantails can be heard over the distant roar of traffic.

perditaphillips.com

Colleen Plumb
(Illinois, United States)

***Warp and Weft*, 2021**
video and sound (14:09)

these i see, (do we see?) the relation to all others, woven:
pollinators   forests   oceans   rivers
meat-ranchers   parades   cheering   consuming.

who is asleep, what is subsidized?
interconnected fragility.

strong   ancient
the street-tree is speaking   same as when the forest bathes us.
they know.

how (are we) trapped, by not seeing the whole?
how to peel veneers and learn to mimic the sharing roots and branches that know all.

to listen.

there is singing   marching   watching
communication
breathing, because the forests are.

colleenplumb.com

Walmeri Ribeiro
(Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

***como um Sopro … como um Sopro Mundo (as a Breath… as a Breath World)*, 2021**
two-channel video installation (10:18)

as a Breath is a two-channel video installation produced in the middle of the Brazilian Atlantic Forest. Part of a long-term performative research, entitled Poetics of Othering, como um Sopro emerges from the potential of the encounter between my body and the Atlantic Forest bodies.
Bodies movement.
Bodies flow.
Bodies in emergence.
… as a world Breath

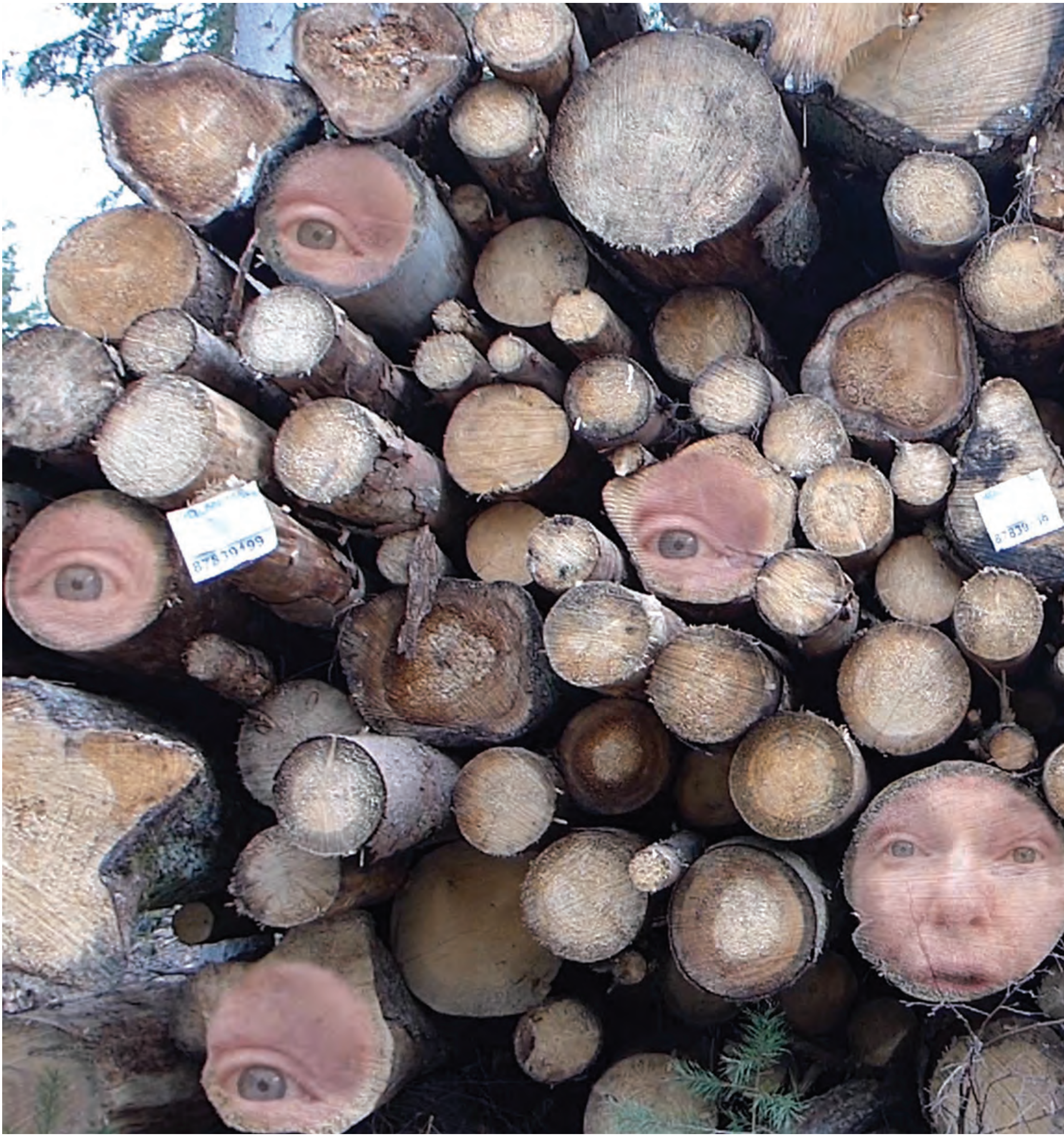
territoriossensiveis.com

Dawn Roe
(Florida, United States)

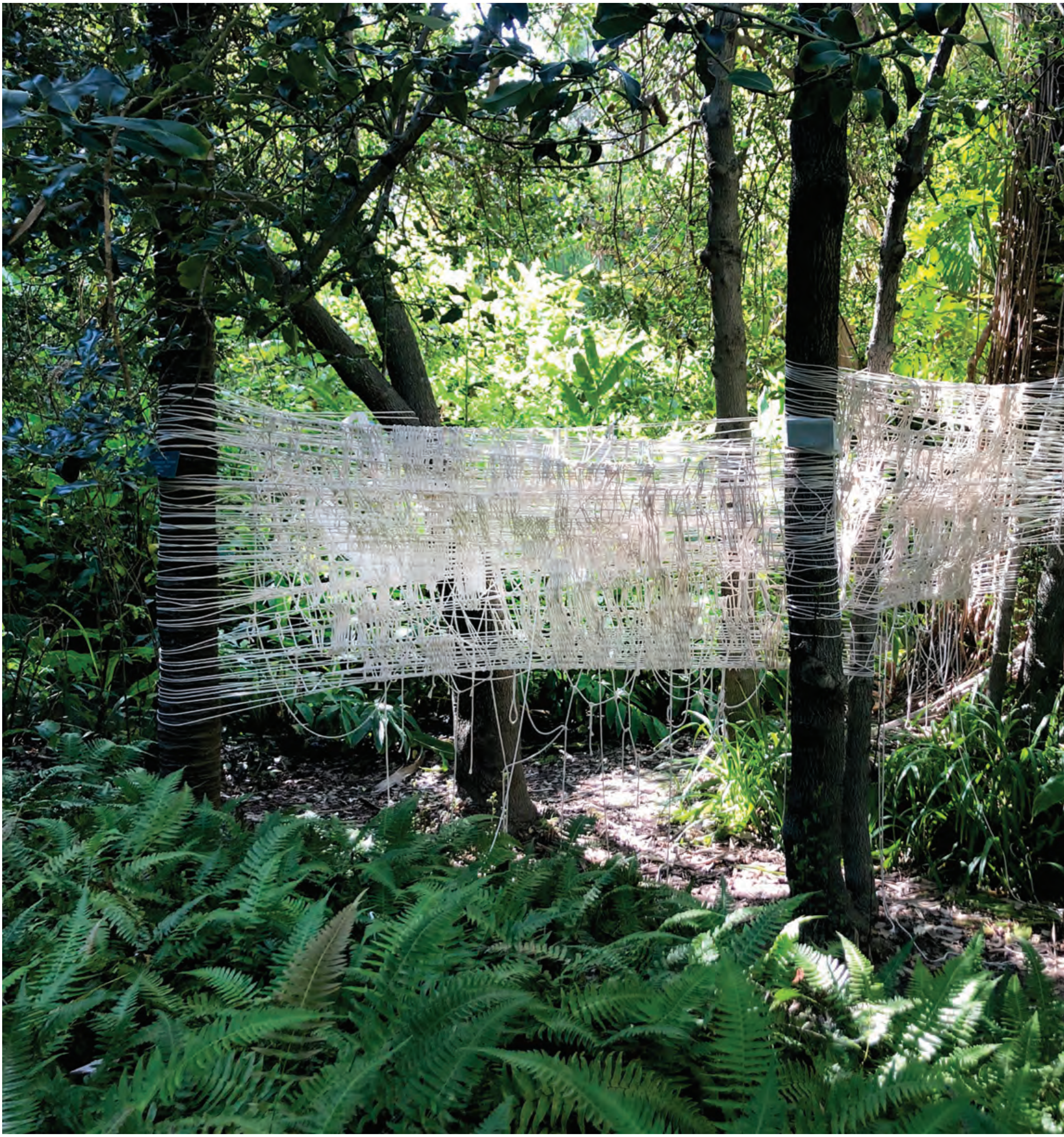
Conditions for an Unfinished Work of Mourning: Wretched Yew, 2020
video and sound (10:52)

This work engages with the Taxus brevifolia species of yew tree found in the Pacific Northwest. A vital component of forest ecosystems, Pacific yew was largely eradicated in the 1990s during indiscriminate logging operations after the tree was found to produce a plant alkaloid highly effective as a chemotherapy drug. A resilient species, scattered old growth yew remain and new saplings continue to emerge. This project offers reverence for the yew as a marker of endurance, further connecting its mythology as a symbol of death and regeneration to my own experience living in the region during a tumultuous time when the sight of clear cut hillsides served as the visual backdrop to personal struggles with addiction, depression, and loss. Wretched Yew functions as acknowledgement of the unsettled sorrow permeating these spaces, operating as both elegy and specter.

dawnroe.com



Julia Adzuki



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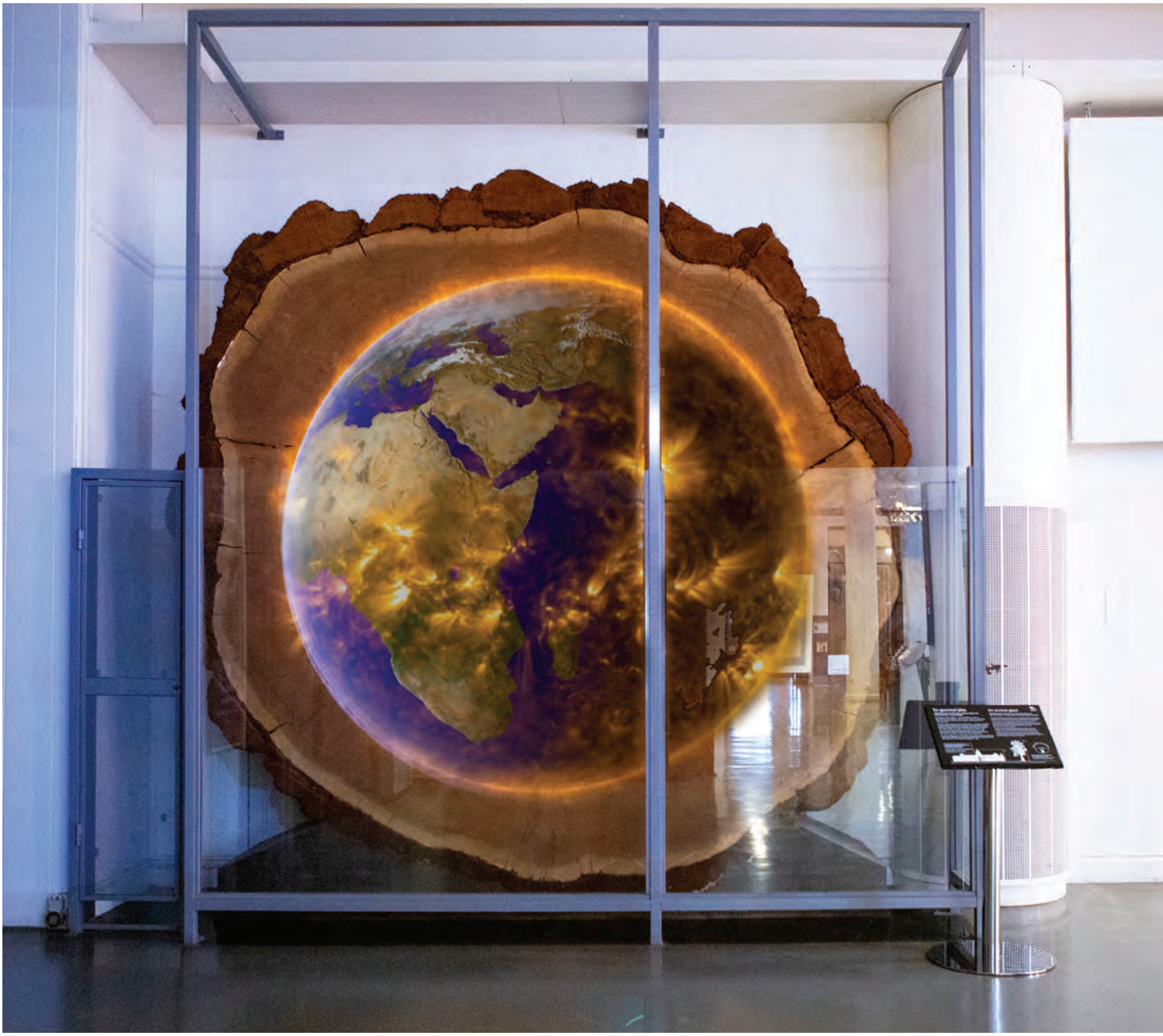

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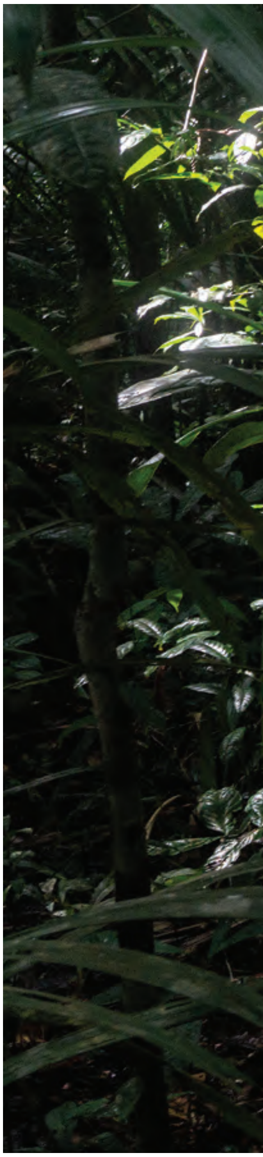

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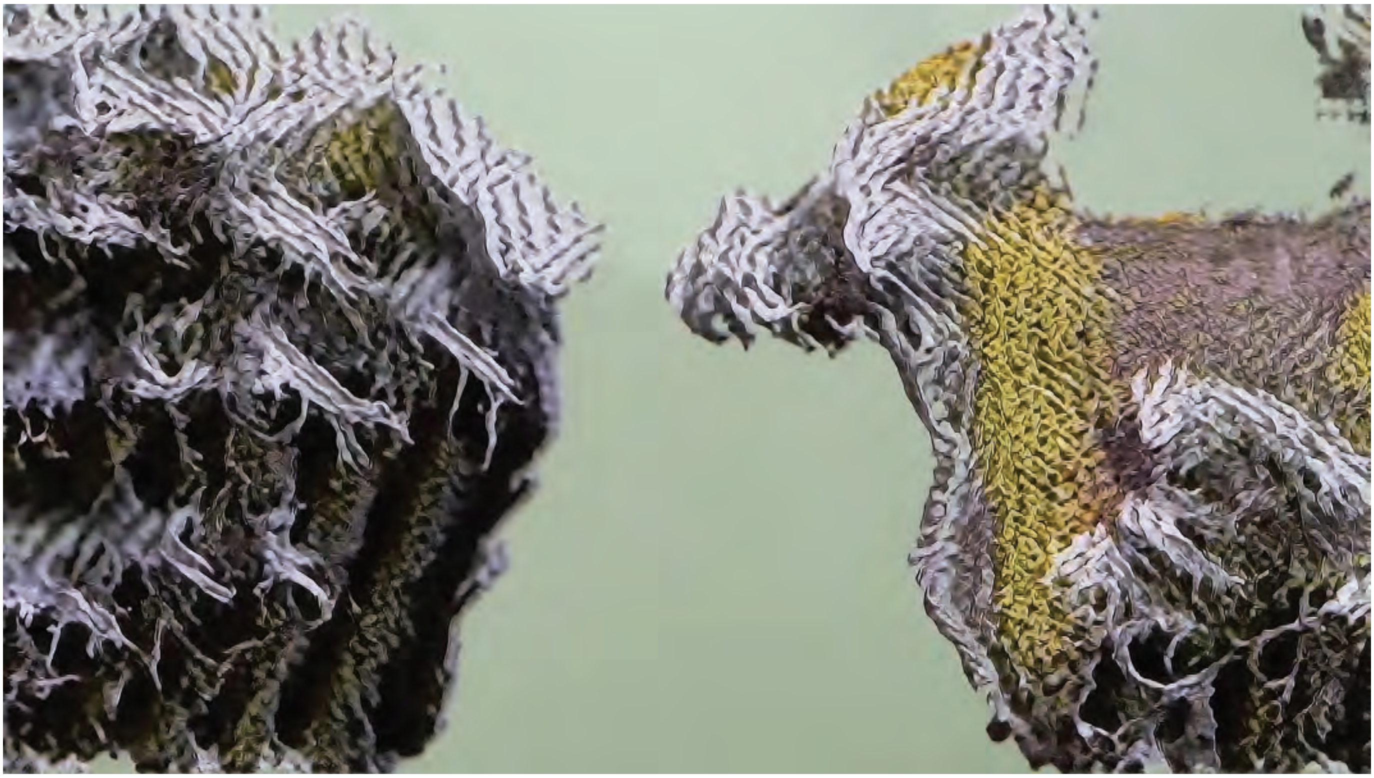
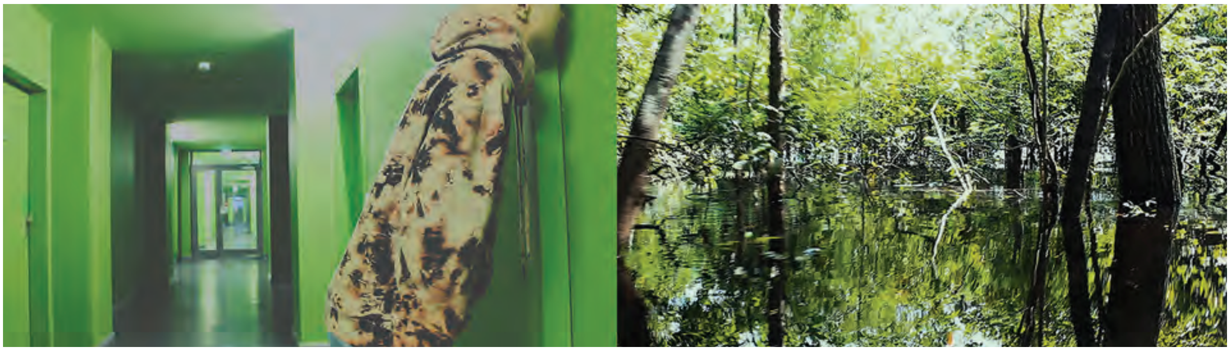
Colin Ives





Milda Lembertaitė

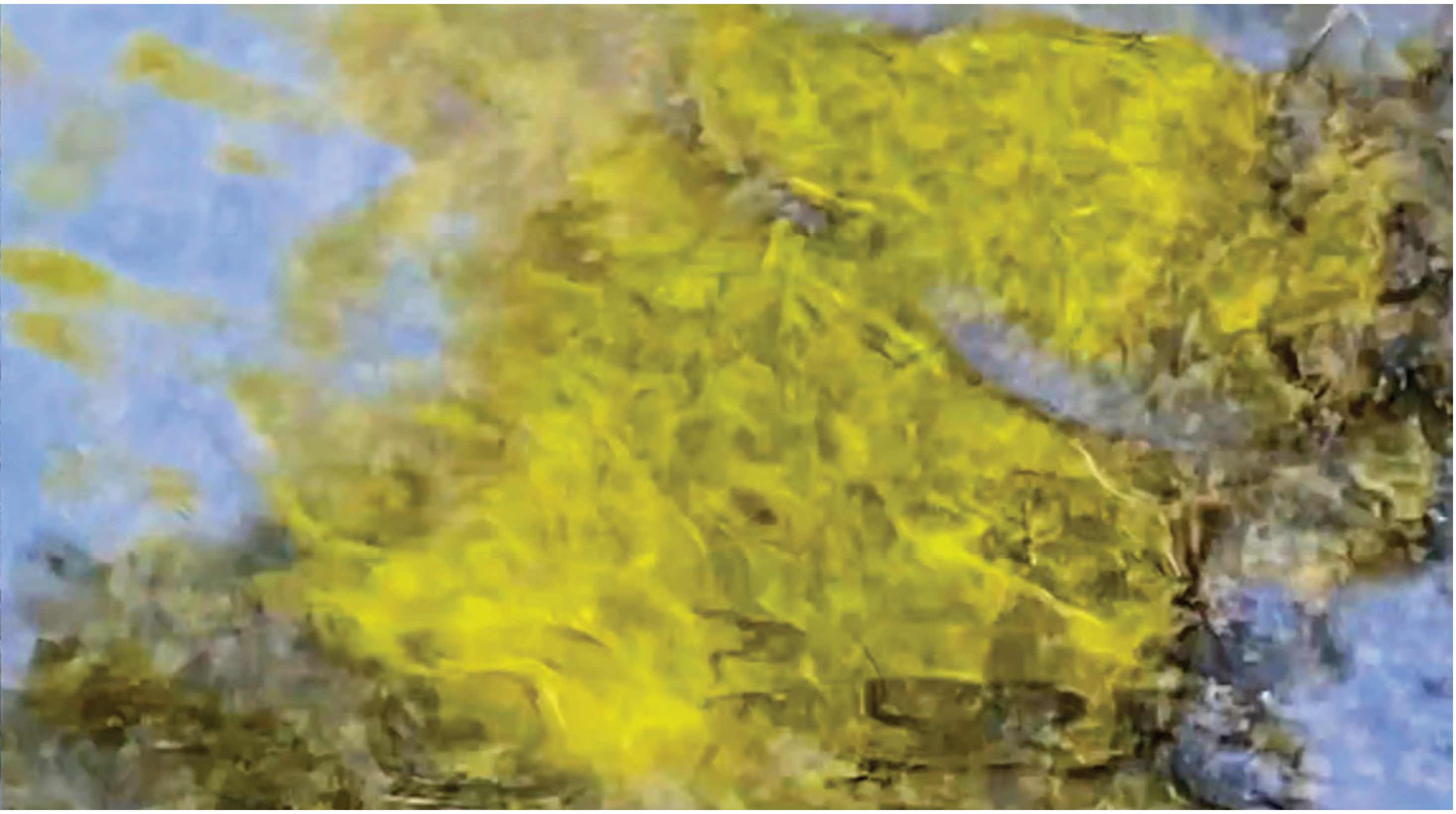
Walter Lewis

Renata Padovan

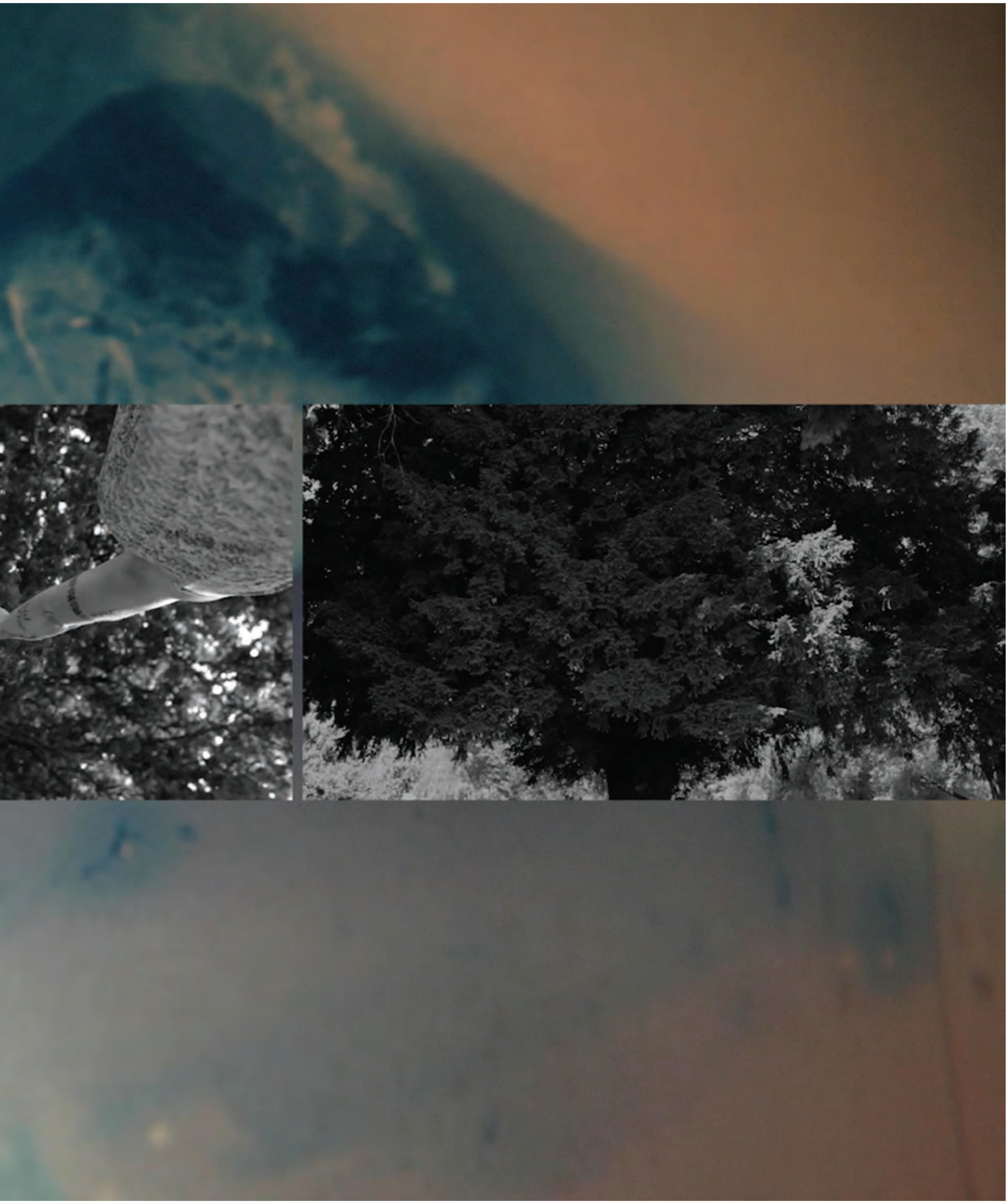
Perdita Phillips

Colleen Plumb

Walmeri Ribeiro



Dawn Roe



Sound

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Fernanda Aloi
(São Paulo, Brazil)

***O Som (The Sound)*, 2021**
photograph with sound

"The goal of life is to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe, to match your nature with Nature."
Joseph Campbell

This work was born in a forest planted by my grandfather. Not only is there a bond with ancestrality, but with nature itself. Resulting all is one, the soil that was there before, my grandfather's hands, the seeds, the body, all beings. This video-sculpture is an emotional response to the urgent state of the world and the experience of feeling closeness and unity to all that surrounds us. It tries to tell us everything is connected, which is the real meaning of being (in) nature. It's an orchestra with its natural rhythm, led by the same conductor, the Universe itself. A body, a breath, a being in between millions of other hidden beings that sings one sound only, the sound of Oneness.

fernandaaloi.com

Skooby Laposky
(Massachusetts, United States)

***Hidden Life Radio*, 2021**
multi long-form biodata sonifications, various lengths

Hidden Life Radio is a public art project by artist Skooby Laposky that aims to increase the general awareness of trees in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the city's disappearing canopy. The idea for Hidden Life Radio came about after having conversations with Cambridge residents who were concerned about the disappearance of the city's old-growth trees. Concurrently, Laposky read Peter Wohlleben's bestseller, *The Hidden Life of Trees*, and realized that a long-form biodata sonification "radio station" could function as a poetic reminder of the trees' amazing existence. *Hidden Life Radio*'s "broadcast" is a musical composition unfolding in real-time and running twenty-four hours a day from leaf out in summer until leaf drop in November. Weather, climate, and other environmental conditions directly affect how the composition is shaped. These generative musical compositions allow listeners to tune in and hear the trees' "hidden life."

hiddenliferadio.com

Tosca Terán
(Ontario, Canada)

***Forest UnderSound*, 2021**
bio-sonification sound installation, various native plants of Ontario, Ganoderma lucidum, Pleurotus ostreatus, bio-sonification modules, custom Eurorack system, transducers, terrarium, 57 x 27 x 20 x 9 inches, for SONICA21 at The Museum, Kitchener, Ontario with assistance from The Ontario Arts Council, and A Space Gallery, Toronto.

This work is an invitation to consider the sentience of fungi. Sentience is the ability to perceive one's environment and experience sensations such as pain and suffering or pleasure and comfort. Both the plant roots and mycelium have electrodes connected to them that send biodata into purpose-built circuits, which detect micro-fluctuations in conductivity between 1,000–100,000 of a second. This biodata is then translated in real-time to control analog and digital synthesizers. Empirically, when fully connected and music is being generated, Mycelium consistently generates periodic patterns that are enigmatic and musical. For reasons that I do not fully understand, Mycelium reacts to the proximity of some people more than others—growing more frantic or more harmonic or completely silent when humans are present. The soundscape changes over time as the fungi and plants grow.

toscateran.com

Anne Yoncha
(Oklahoma, United States)

***Succession: A Visual Score*, 2021**
dye from locally sourced cedar and Lake Ogallala water, graphite on paper, digital overlay of MIDI biodata recorded from eastern red cedar and mixed prairie grasses directly below its canopy

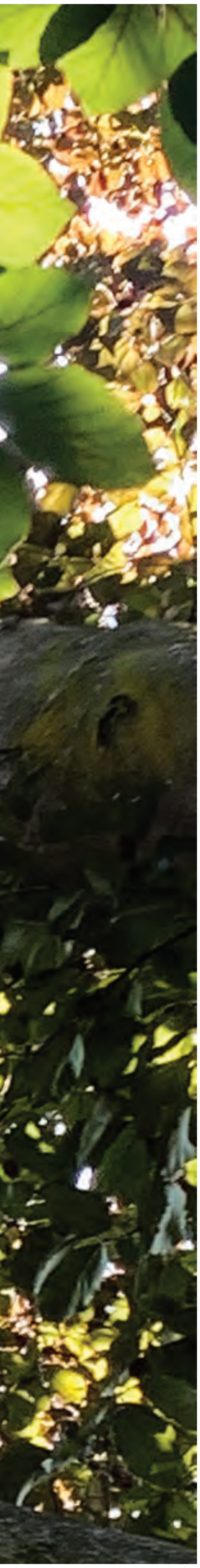
In collaboration with composer Shari Feldman & cellist Julia Marks

Because of increased human settlement and changes in fire regimes, eastern red cedar (though native) increasingly outcompetes mixed prairie grasses, an example of forest succession. “Succession” depicts a series of mixed prairie grasses found on-site within the shape of one large cedar. I recorded two minutes of biodata of grasses (blue digital overlay) and cedar (red) from the site, using a galvanometer sensor. The biodata is sonified with a multi-track cello recording. Engaging with interpretations of plants as entities in dynamic relationships with their surroundings can contribute to our ability to think more critically about the way we perceive and value novel ecosystems and post-human landscapes.

anneyoncha.com

Fernanda Aloi

Skooby Laposky



Tosca Terán

Anne Yoncha

Painting & Printmaking

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Andrea Bersaglieri
(California, United States)

Front, 2021
oil on canvas, 8 x 12 feet

The formal, conceptual, and emotional relationship (sub)urbanites have with trees and the natural world is fraught with contradictions. We find only certain plants beautiful, and then we leave no room for them. But nature is tenaciousness. Which plants will thrive around us as the environment struggles? Which plants will out survive us? Do we have any control or even responsibility to dictate what grows on the plots beneath our feet? Will the plants that we now consider weeds become our new cultivars and crops? How does the dirt beneath us feed into and contain these dichotomies? Novel ecosystems are areas that we have irreparably disturbed and abandoned: Vacant lots, city parks, the sides of freeways, even our yards. Novel ecosystems have become a kind of "substitute nature" for us, and the contradictions and questions that arise are the sources for this body of work.

abersaglieri.com

Keith D Buswell
(Nebraska, United States)

***Hawley*, 2018**
etching on paper, 33.5 x 38.5 inches

Community is a notion that we are not only connected by not only our heritage or proximity but also through an exchange of ideas and a desire to help one another. Trees personify this complex and vital system. In 2016, ecologist Suzanne Simard wanted to find out if trees could talk to each other. What she found was a network of fungi underground connecting the roots of trees that not only relayed information to each other but also provided nutrients for young and dying plants. This discovery is an embodiment of community. By using different types of trees in different communities, I am portraying systems of living together. We need our farmers, teachers, and artists just as much as trees need a forest. The threads that connect us may not be as visible as my work prescribes, but they are there—a continuous interconnection to one another.

keithdbuswell.art

Pamela Casper
(New York, United States)

***Underground Glow*, 2020**
watercolor on paper, 30 x 22 inches

My paintings explore the hidden world below the soil's surface, where tree roots meet other life forms and networks, interconnecting in mysterious and vital ways. To imply the energy in this biosphere, I portray the processes deep in the Earth with glowing colors. Utilizing the paint's fluidity, I create otherworldly spaces interspersed with insects and eccentric microscopic forms referenced from nature. I work with a range of techniques within one painting, mixing the mutability of abstraction with figurative detail. My objective is to awaken an emotional and scientific thought process while posing the question, "does life colonize up from the depths or down from the surface" or both?

pamelacasper.com

Hannah Chalew
(Louisiana, United States)

***Embodied Emissions*, 2020**
iron, oak gall ink, ink made from shells, on paper made from sugarcane and shredded disposable plastic, 61 x 92 inches

I make work that connects fossil fuel extraction and plastic production to their roots in the white supremacy and capitalism that have fueled the exploitation of people and the landscape of Southern Louisiana from the times of colonization and enslavement. I create ink from oak galls collected from live oak trees around New Orleans that I use to create drawings where swamp flora and infrastructure are inextricably entangled, and these works often include oak trees. These majestic trees can live for many centuries, so by using ink from these trees, I am also tapping into the history they have witnessed. My work draws viewers into an experience that bridges past and present visions of the future ecosystems that might emerge from our culture's detritus if we fail to change course.

hannahchalew.com

Katie DeGroot
(New York, United States)

***Resplendent*, 2020**
watercolor on paper, 50 x 40 inches

The Singular Elegance of Trees: When we think of trees, we usually form an image of a perfectly pruned tree, balanced and symmetrical. In nature, those rarely exist. Trees are individuals. They grow to survive, becoming contortionists to get to sunlight and bowing to the will of other more giant trees. Trees grow in context to each other and their neighbors. In many ways, they are similar to us, part of a larger community whose specific environmental challenges form us as human beings. My artwork begins by collecting fallen branches, festooned by lichens, moss, and mushrooms, and bringing them back to my studio. I work with individual branches and even larger tree trunks; they are my "muses." I arrange them to interact, forming an ambiguous anthropomorphic story. Indeed, there is humor involved, as well as historical and contemporary art references. I hope to honor the beauty and individuality of trees even in their inevitable demise.

katiedegroot.com

Jeanne Dunn
(California, United States)

***Risk It All*, 2020**
acrylic on canvas, 72 x 192 inches

Each time I start a new work I look for fresh ways to depict the agency of trees. My purpose is to address several issues: to subvert the notion that trees are mere passive plants that give us shade; to reflect the discoveries that research scientists are revealing about measurable complex interconnectivity between differing species both above and below ground; and to promote our being agents for positive change. By employing paint, collage, and drawing, I create landscapes that convey the mental and moral climate of our time. In this series trees and forests express our shared and world-wide interdependence.

jeannedunn.net

Susan Hoffman Fishman
(Connecticut, United States)

***Rampikes 3*, 2019**
acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 4 x 4 feet

Rampikes is a series that addresses the proliferation of dead trees standing along our rivers and coastlines that were killed when their roots absorbed saltwater from rising seas. In this work, I think about the decades and centuries of memories embedded in the trees that were lost when they died. I am thinking about the human presence in these memories that is no more and the systems of connection, which enable the trees to communicate, cut off forever.

susanhoffmanfishman.com

Toni Gentilli
(New Mexico, United States)

***Cavity*, 2020**
wild-crafted botanical paint made from cottonwood catkins with salt and graphite on cotton rag paper, 48 x 48 inches

My creative practice is rooted in the process of exploration bridging art, science, and embodied knowing. I use sustainably foraged botanical materials to make camera-less photographs, paintings, weavings, and site-specific installations. Through this work, I give form to the entanglement of plant and human wellbeing while tending to topics of autoimmunity and other chronic conditions linked to ecosystem degradation. In the Middle Rio Grande Valley, cottonwood trees struggle due to human disruption of the natural flood cycle. Prolonged drought is causing weakened immune systems in these phreatophytes, which increasingly suffer from fungal infection and other environmental stressors. Beyond living among them, I feel a deep kinship with Rio Grande cottonwoods because I have a chronic case of Coccidioidomycosis, a pulmonary infection caused by soil-dwelling fungus endemic to the Southwestern US. I've worked with these trees for five years as subject and material to cultivate empathy for our entwined plights.

tonigentilli.com

Laura Gorski
(São Paulo, Brazil)

***Sprout in the Encounter*, 2021**
earth and leaves on paper, 50 x 70 inches

My research involves landscapes investigation, creating situations of contemplation and silence through drawing and its relationship with body and space. When I first entered the Amazon Forest, I experienced a crossing that reverberates in me until today. The experience of forest immersion makes me connect with the time of listening to nature, from outside and inside. In the pause, the silence, the possibility of permanence, a process of reading the landscape, begins through forms and beings that compose it. To be in the forest is to understand that there is no outside. The forest is a circular whole where everything fits. Everything that is part of the whole. Everything that ceases to be is part of the whole. It is in the rhythm of seed germination that the body of my work is born.

lauragorski.com

Juniper Harrower
(California, United States)

***Staying with the Trouble for Joshua Trees*, 2020**
acrylic, alcohol, and seed oil on paper, 18 x 24 inches

Through a combination of quantitative ecological research, art investigations, and explorations in ethnographies, I study Joshua tree species interactions under climate change. My empirical data drives decisions in the colors, while canvas tearing symbolizes the critical interactions happening between the roots and their fungi along a symbiotic spectrum—the stitching patterns changing based on novel fungal species that I have identified with DNA sequencing analysis. I tear into and re-stitch the canvas using tree fibers representative of the tension inherent to symbiotic species interactions and evoking the tensions between ecosystems and humanity. The use of strings also references critical theorist Donna Haraway's "string figures." Haraway refers to weaving our stories with the looping of threads that create patterns on our vulnerable and wounded earth—a bringing together of multispecies stories to relay connections and tell stories that contribute to our collective worlding.

juniperharrower.com

Susan Hoenig
(New Jersey, United States)

***Entanglement*, 2020**
acrylic on paper, 11 x 15 inches

Animals, plants, and humans are forever entangled in ecological interactions. We are an inseparable whole. I study and paint the connections between living organisms in the natural world and the environment that sustains them. White Ash, Fraxinus americana, is native to Eastern and Central North America. Ecologically, ash trees provide habitat and food for various animals, such as the Red-bellied Woodpecker, Wild Turkey, Wood Duck, White-tailed Deer, Fox Squirrel, the White-footed mouse, and 43 native insect species. White Ash trees are dioecious, male and female flowers are on separate trees, and only the female flowers develop fruits. The winged seedpods, samaras, are a good source of forage; the branches, bark, and tree cavities make the tree invaluable. This connectivity is crucial for seed dispersal and the growth of the tree. Unfortunately, the White Ash trees are being decimated by the Emerald Ash Borer. The loss of the White Ash is devastating for our ecosystem.

susanhoenig.com

Karey Kessler
(Washington, United States)

***A Slow Wisdom*, 2016**
watercolor on paper, 12 x 16 inches

I consider painting an act of meditation. When I'm making the repeated dots and lines of my map-paintings, I focus on the interconnected ecosystems of the world, the slowness and wisdom of trees, and the deep-time of geologic history. Living in the Pacific Northwest, I am deeply aware of the fraught relationship between humans and trees. Trees are a resource, yet we are utterly dependent on the existence of old-growth forests—both for the oxygen they provide and the home they create for a massive network of animals, plants, and fungus. I'm fascinated by the world-wood-web and how mushrooms connecting the forest floor are releasing nutrients and messages and warnings for the trees and plants. Trees are our quiet companions during our short human lifetimes on this earth. But, because of their longevity, they connect us from one generation to the next.

kareykessler.com

Nicole Kutz
(Tennessee, United States)

***Automatic 7*, 2021**
Flashe paint on paper, 22 x 30 inches

This painting is part of a more extensive series of trees using Flashe paint on black paper. The work focuses on the inherent vulnerability felt by women and how that mirrors the environmental threats society places on our natural world. I drew the parallel while running and became panic-stricken as I recalled warnings of what happens to girls who run alone. Once I realized I was projecting my anxieties onto the environment, it dawned on me that this same landscape had fears of its own. I feel women are often conditioned to be afraid as a survival tactic. This fear is shared by Mother Earth, as she too feels a similar threat of aggression. Despite the ominous insinuations, these paintings are imbued with strength, reminding us of the ability of nature—and humans—to adapt and overcome.

nicolekutz.com

Jill Lear
(Idaho, United States)

***Austin Treaty Oak XVIII*, 2020**
charcoal, acrylic, watercolor, mulberry and lokta paper, washi tape, 60 x 44 inches

It starts with a single tree in the landscape: ancient, complex, and witness to history. I assign it its latitude and longitude, and the investigation begins; a mapping of the experience of being in and thinking about Nature. In my latest series titled *Urban Sprawl: Trees in Cities*, I visit and record trees that survive and thrive in urban areas. I choose magnificent trees that reach out and embrace their environments with sprawling branches and intricate root systems. My work speaks to trees' participation in our urban communities, sustaining themselves in their restricted environments while managing to "give back" to the community; by reducing air and water pollution, storing carbon, and increasing property values. Trees can also strengthen social connections and are associated with reduced crime rates. They are essential to our physical and emotional well-being. These trees are not just my subject matter; they are my inspiration.

jilllear.com

Linda MacDonald
(California, United States)

***Look Up, In and Out*, 2021**
watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 inches

In northwest California, the redwood trees are the signature tree used for lumber, tourist attractions, and forest bathing. In the 19th and 20th centuries, lumber barons cut down ninety-five percent of the virgin redwoods, and the rest are primarily in state and national parks. I visit these trees, share their environment and wonder at their resilience. I am drawn to the large old ones that have grown in unique ways, revealing a map, the weather, the fires, and human contact. I'm a painter using watercolors and oils to reveal these trees in their multiplicity. From within the tree and looking up, you can see how the wildfires worked, the burn scars, the areas of living trees with bark, sapwood, and heartwood, and the branches and needles. Trees are the wealth of the world in so many ways. Knowledge and protection of their existence are essential to all of us and every living lifeform.

lindamacdonald.com

Karen Marston
(New York, United States)

***Fountain*, 2020**
oil on paper, 20 x 26 inches

In this context, the forest on fire embodies all of our fears of climate catastrophe and destruction, the majestic power and vulnerability of nature. With this new body of work, all completed in 2020, I have come full circle back to fire—the trigger for my initial interest in climate change ten years ago—a fitting subject both literally and metaphorically for a tumultuous year. Early 2020 began with Australia engulfed in record-breaking wildfires, California, where I grew up, followed suit a few months later, and Siberia saw its vast smoldering "zombie fires" continuing to burn. So, against the backdrop of a raging pandemic and political upheaval, locked down in my Brooklyn studio, I have been painting the world on fire.

karenmarston.com

Fiona Morehouse
(Vermont, United States)

***Noetics*, 2020**
gouache on paper, 20 x 16 inches

Excavating layers of human-earth connection, I bring the subtle realms to the surface by painting landscapes from the inside out. Intrigued by the symbiotic relationship between humans and trees, breath is a quiet yet unifying thread throughout my work. Interested in visualizing the invisible threads of interconnection, I work with oils on canvas and gouache on paper to emphasize the reciprocal nature of the internal and external, the micro and macro. In this space, the breath is a channel between the above and below, the within and without.

fionamorehouse.com

Mia Mulvey
(Colorado, United States)

***Bristlecone*, 2018**
cyanotype, ceramic, wood, 26 inches diameter

My work explores issues of remoteness, climate, and ecological time as evidenced by the landscape through ancient trees. I have been investigating ancient trees through field research in locations such as Scandinavia, Poland and the Western US. Places where trees have served as silent witnesses and remember details of timescales near and far. I am interested in climactic events' unique and varied role as markers of change and a catalog of memories. I utilize technology to sculpturally record and investigate the environment as a way to see and honor the "ground truth" of specific locations. Layering is a crucial element, compressed and organized into the comfort of repetition and growth. It records the passage of time and the mark of process and signifies both past and present, transforming surfaces into form.

miamulveystudio.com

Erika Osborne
(Colorado, United States)

***La Redención* (triptych), 2020**
oil on canvas, 60 x 54 inches each

left to right: ***La Fogata (Durante El Incendio)***, ***El Susurro (Tres Años Después)***, ***Reclamación (Catorce Años Después)***

For millennia, the raw nature of fire shaped the ecology of western North America. Paradoxically, as fire shaped and settled culture in this region, humans began to push it away. Today, we rarely cook over an open fire or use it to improve hunting grounds. Instead, fire has been banished - not only from our homes and fields but from the very forests that need it to survive. In doing so, we have put our survival in jeopardy. Walking into the Sierra de la Laguna in Mexico is like hitting a rewind button. There, fire acts as a sustaining force in kitchens and fields. Due to various factors, it's also left to burn when it does escape, clearing out brush and making space for the largest trees. These paintings bear witness to this process, illuminating what is possible if we (re)cultivate our relationship with fire.

erikaosborne.com

Greg Rose
(California, United States)

***Don't You Know Who I Am*, 2020**
gouache on paper, 14 x 20 inches

For the past several years, I have focused on depicting the various conifers found in the San Gabriel Mountains. The trees on this range are rugged and show off the weathering they endure in an extreme environment. Each tree is unique and has its own individual character, and seen together, the trees represent a diversity of members within a family or individuals within a community. The compositions that I create, involving multiple trees, take on a narrative quality mirroring back both the tension and sense of connection that we might find in our own lives. Are these trees stuck in the roles that they were assigned in their formative years, grounded in place and unable to change—or can they transcend the definitions and grow in their own direction? This same question can be asked of ourselves.

gregrosestudio.com

Flora Temnouche
(New York, United States)

***Aborescence*, 2020**
pencil on Japanese paper, 60 x 80 inches

I have been intrigued by those plants that you can see through our frozen windows in the city, which the provenance is very often unknown. There is an indifference of the decorative plant concerning her origin and her presence. This is how my interest in exotic plants and forests started. The trees I'm depicting are more disembodied than showing a connection between the plants together. My forests are imagined like fictitious frescoes, inspired by those interior gardens from the XIXth century, where the interest for exotism started. This attraction for exotic plants, interior jungles still exists today, like an extension of this tendency to reassemble a part of the world in our rooms, but where nature is disconnected to her roots.

flora-temnouche.com

Marie Thibeault
(California, United States)

***Speed of Sound*, 2021**
oil on canvas, 48 x 46 inches

Painting is capable of evoking the experience of time by suspending the present moment within a physical form. This embodiment allows the past, present, and future to shift and coexist. By employing visual systems such as pattern, stratification, and rupture, my work addresses complexity, acceleration, and collapse caused by environmental strain and structural overload. I attempt to reconcile the tension between instability and balance using architectural structures within atmospheric conditions. I am interested in deepening empathy and visualizing our interconnectedness with and inseparability from the natural world and its complex ecosystems. *Speed of Sound* is a response to direct encounters with beloved places in the California mountains that have been ravaged by wildfires in recent years.

mariethibeault.com

Deborah Wasserman
(New York, United States)

***The Embrace*, 2021**
acrylic, oil and cloth on canvas, 60 x 72 inches

Trees are endlessly fascinating because so many of their qualities and attributes prove that they are superior beings and immensely beneficial to the planet and humans. As the longest living organisms on the earth, they have ecosystems and ways of 'socializing' and communicating with one another through fungal networks in their roots. Trees 'predict' and help us fight climate change. They also improve water quality and reduce sound waves. I relate to and perceive trees as wise old beings, natural allies to humankind. Studying them and being in their presence makes one understand the concept of the interconnectedness of creation. Trees are our teachers. We should cherish them, learn from them and invest in their growth.

deborahwasserman.com

Ripley Whiteside
(Nashville, United States)

***Transpiration 3*, 2020**
watercolor on paper, 47 x 42 inches

The water cycle, in all its complexity, can be hard to see for several reasons. This ecological cycle, the ubiquitous driver of life on this planet, involves the movement of water in and out of material states, geographic surfaces, and living things. Transpiration references a part of the water cycle wherein water is exhaled by plants. It is a landscape constructed by laying pressed plants that have been dipped in watercolor onto wet paper. While they evoke a forest, the plants were collected from my yard, echoing the theory that scalable flow systems design nature.

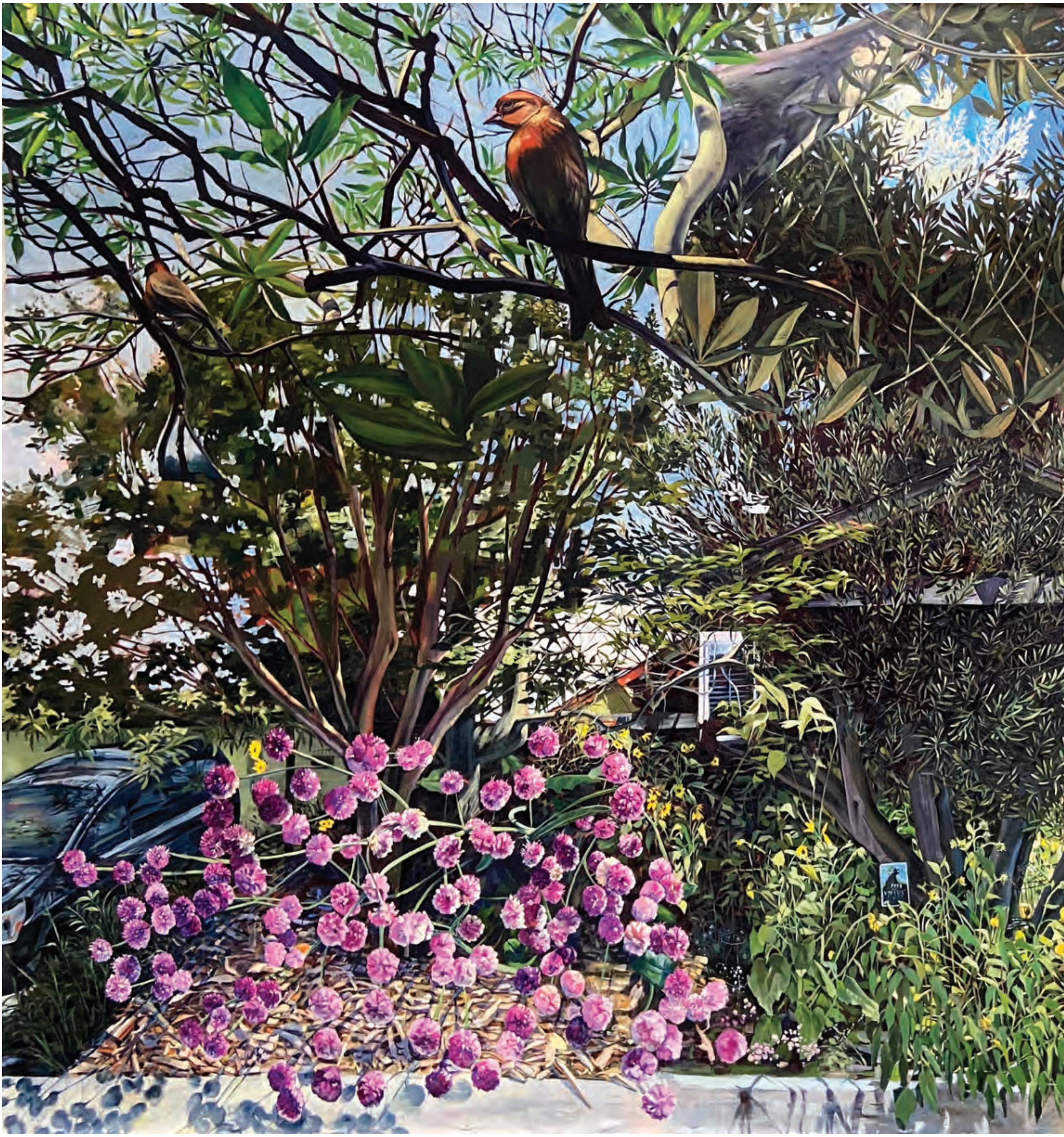
ripleywhiteside.com

Adam Wolpert
(California, United States)

***Moss Oak*, 2021**
oil on linen, 4 x 6 feet

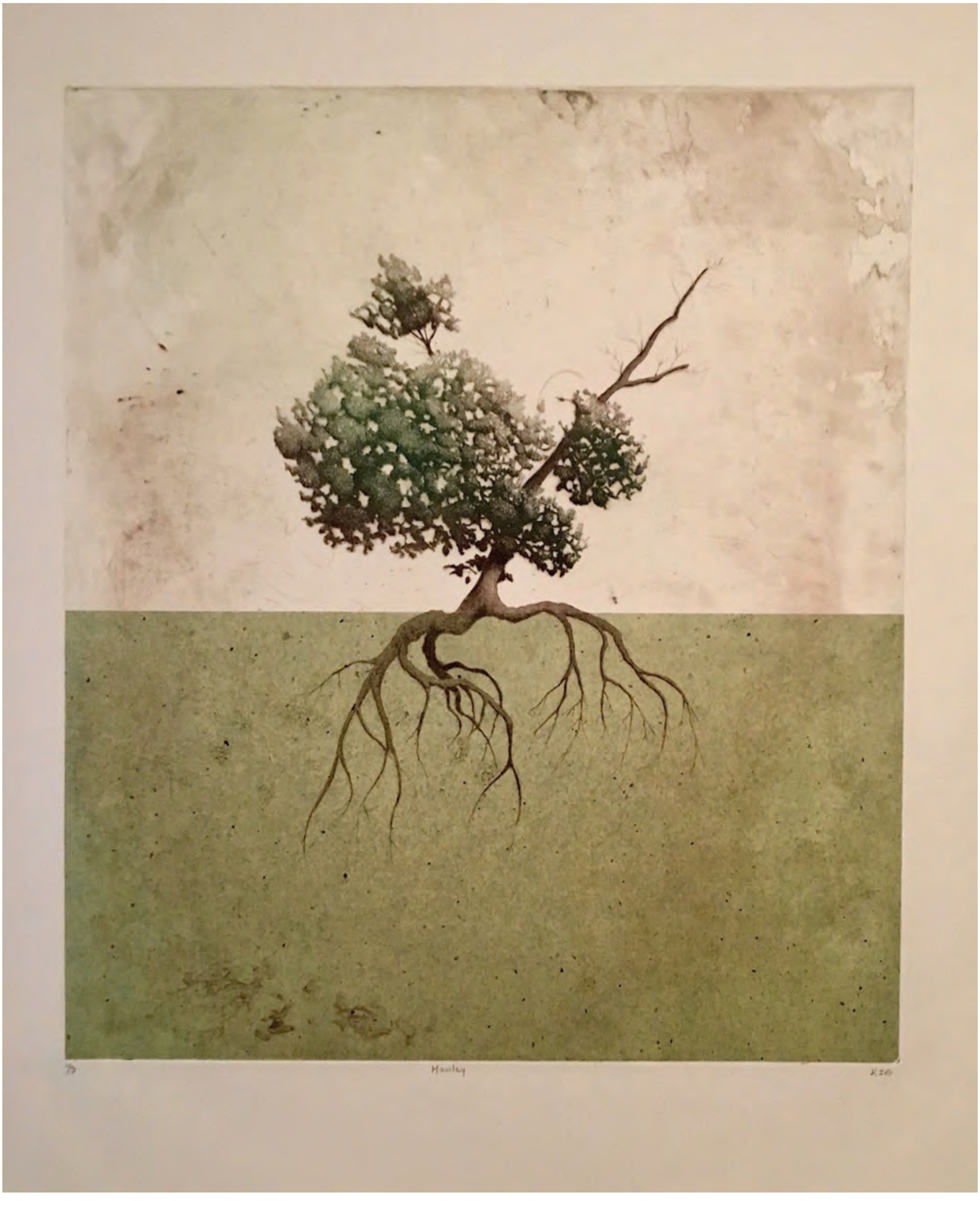
In 2017 I began the Great Oak Series of oak tree portraits. I have the privilege of living with these trees and sitting with them often. The paintings that result are not only portraits of trees but relationships.
I experience trees as teachers, as sources of shelter and wonder, as whole communities, and as beings possessing great beauty. As we come into relationship with a tree, we enter a relationship with an entire ecosystem that is vast, dynamic and conscious. Through painting, I take my place as part of this intricate network. As I perceive, I participate. In these perilous times, in this region where I live, many trees are dying from disease, which adds urgency. I hope these portraits can serve as a humble invitation to others to forge their own and find healing wisdom, inspiration, and reverence.

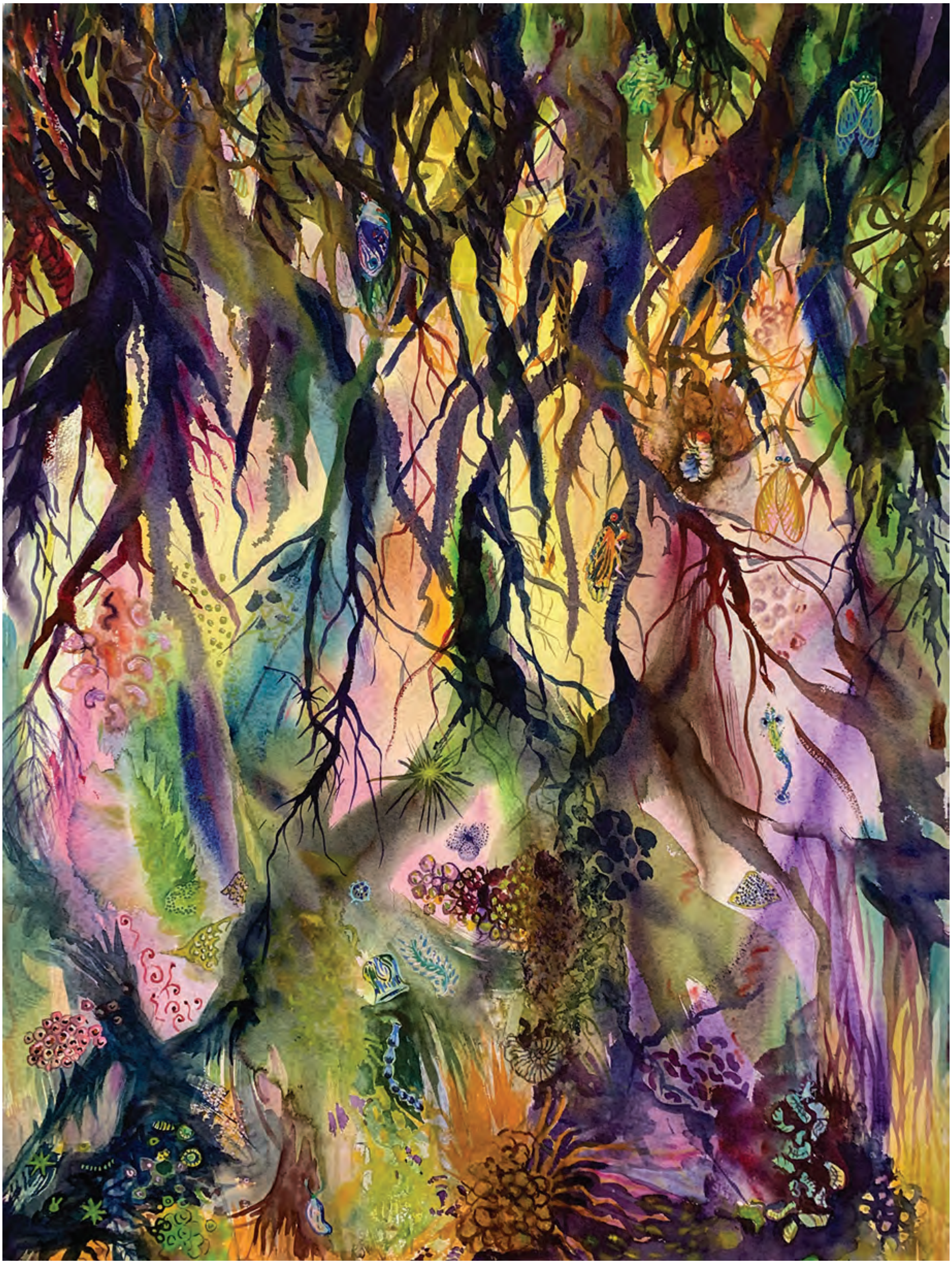
adamwolpert.com



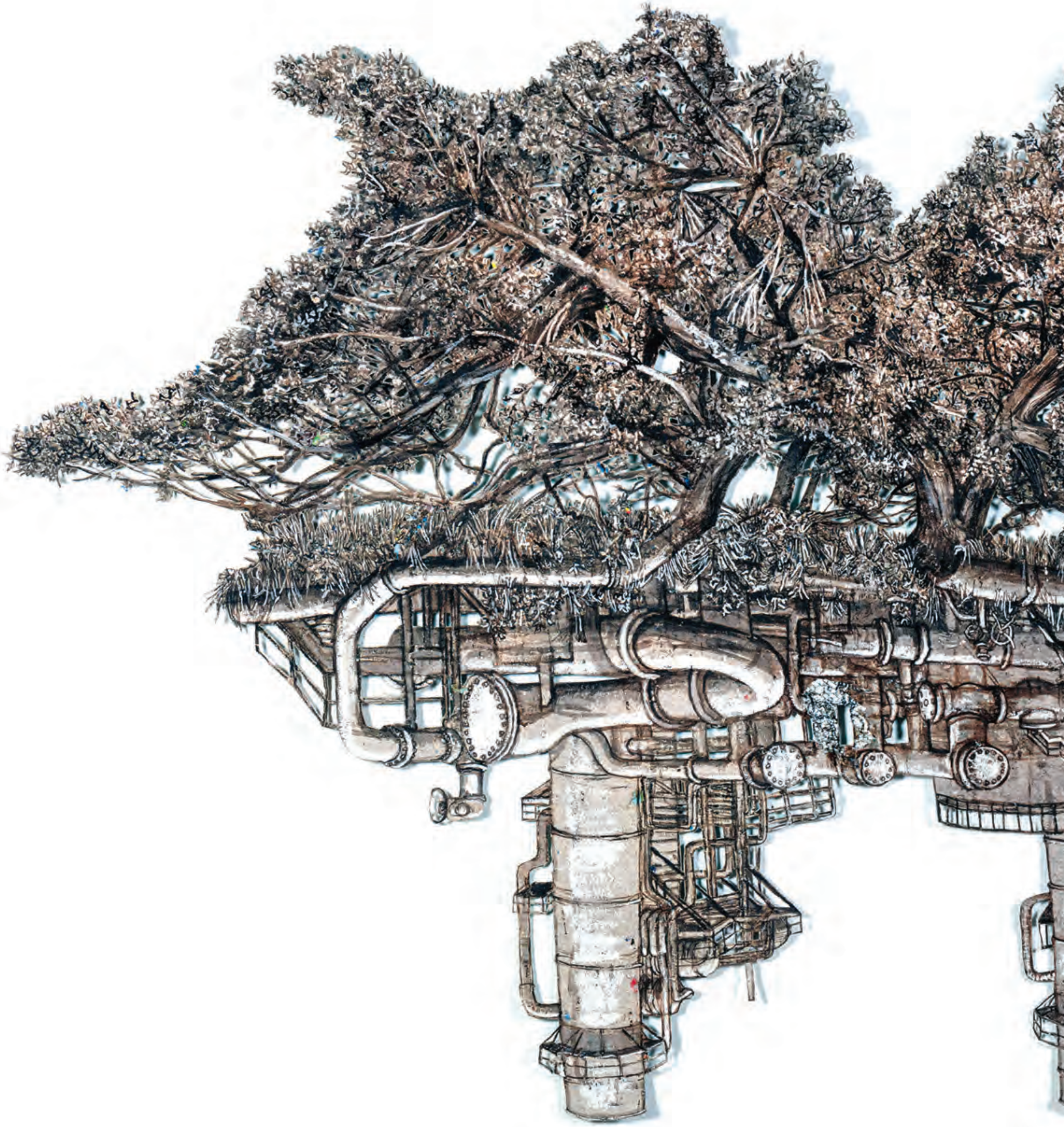
Andrea Bersaglieri

Keith D Buswell


Hawley

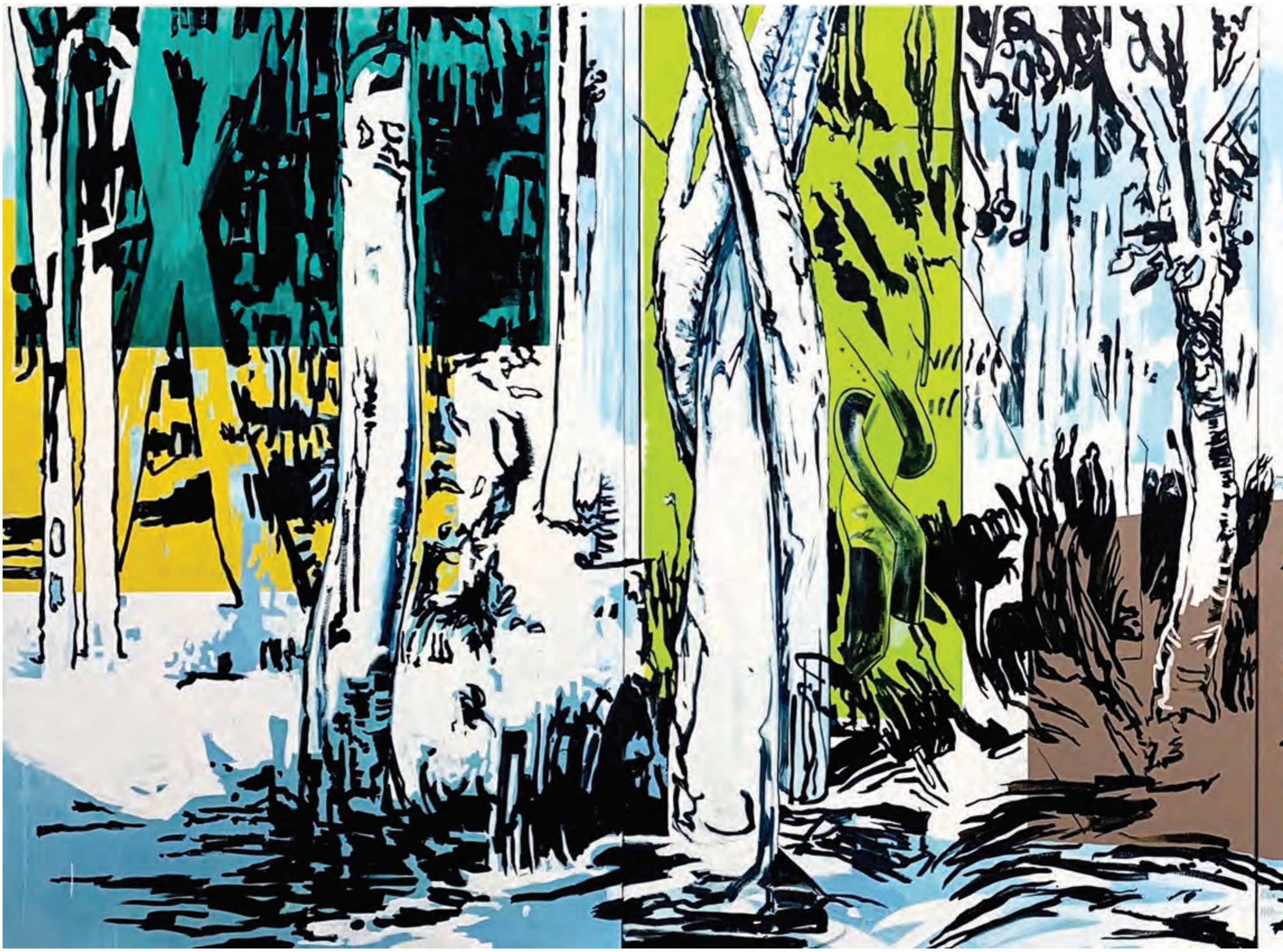


Pamela Casper



Hannah Chalew

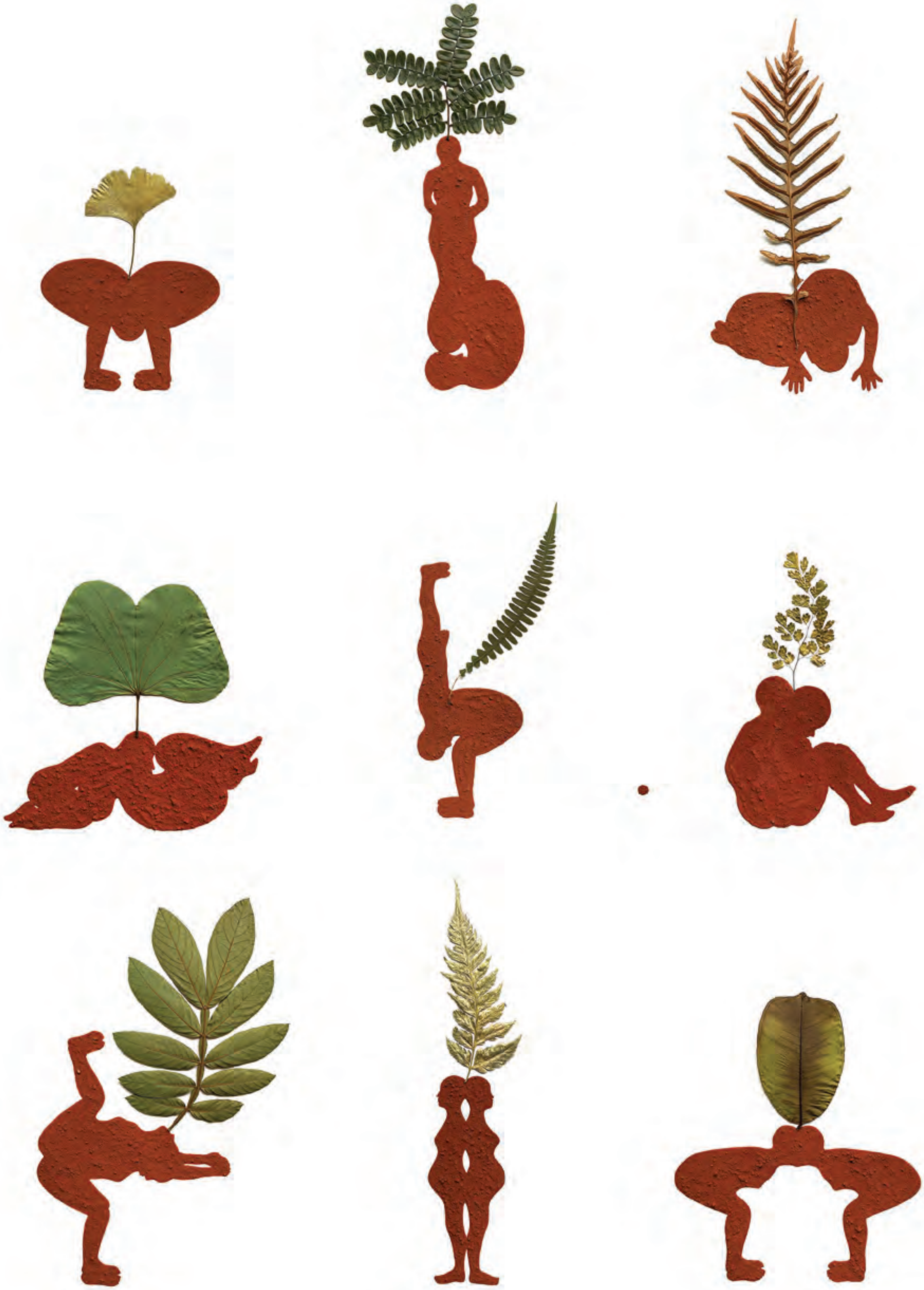
Katie DeGroot



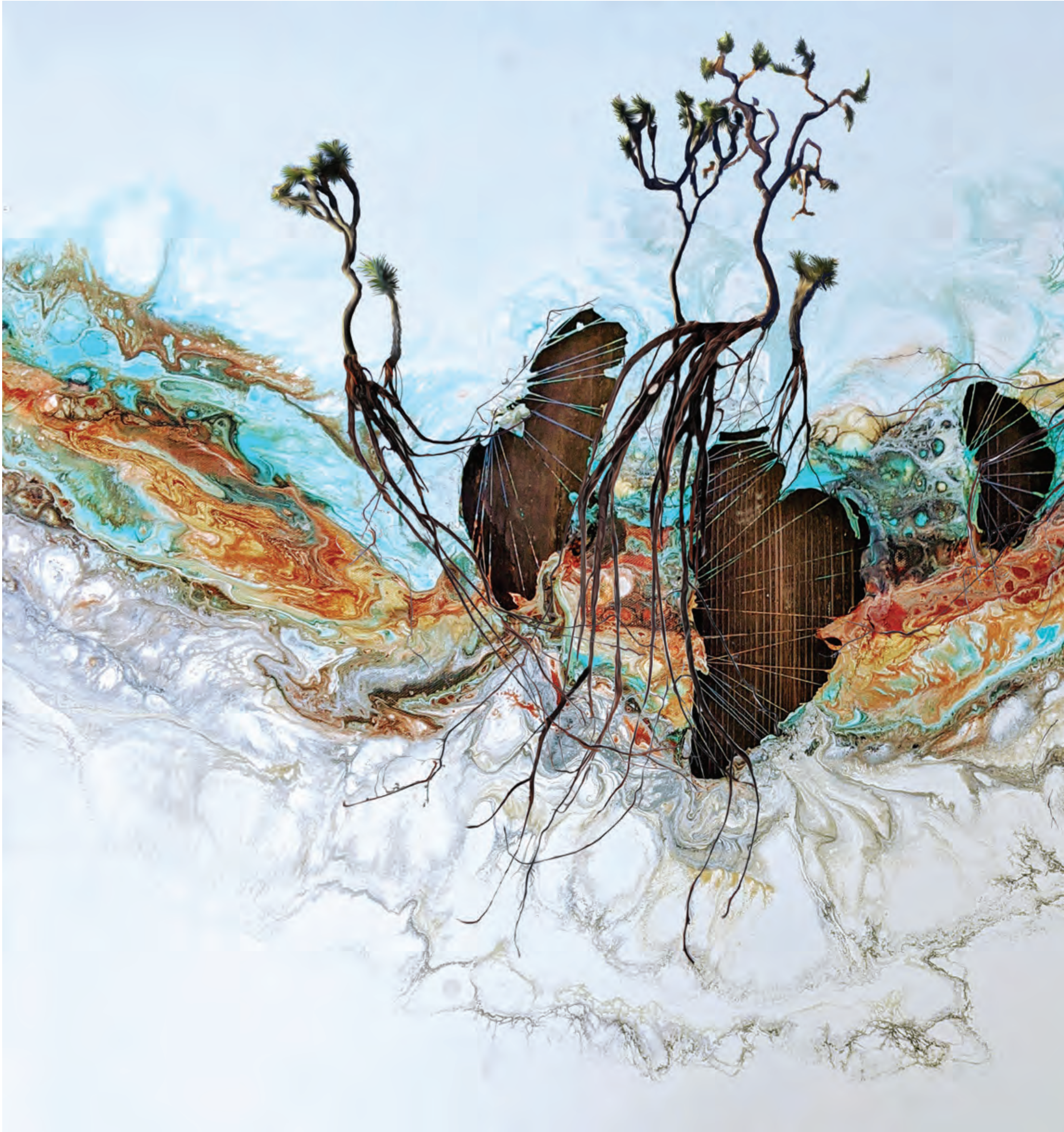
Jeanne Dunn

Susan Hoffman Fishman

Toni Gentilli



Laura Gorski



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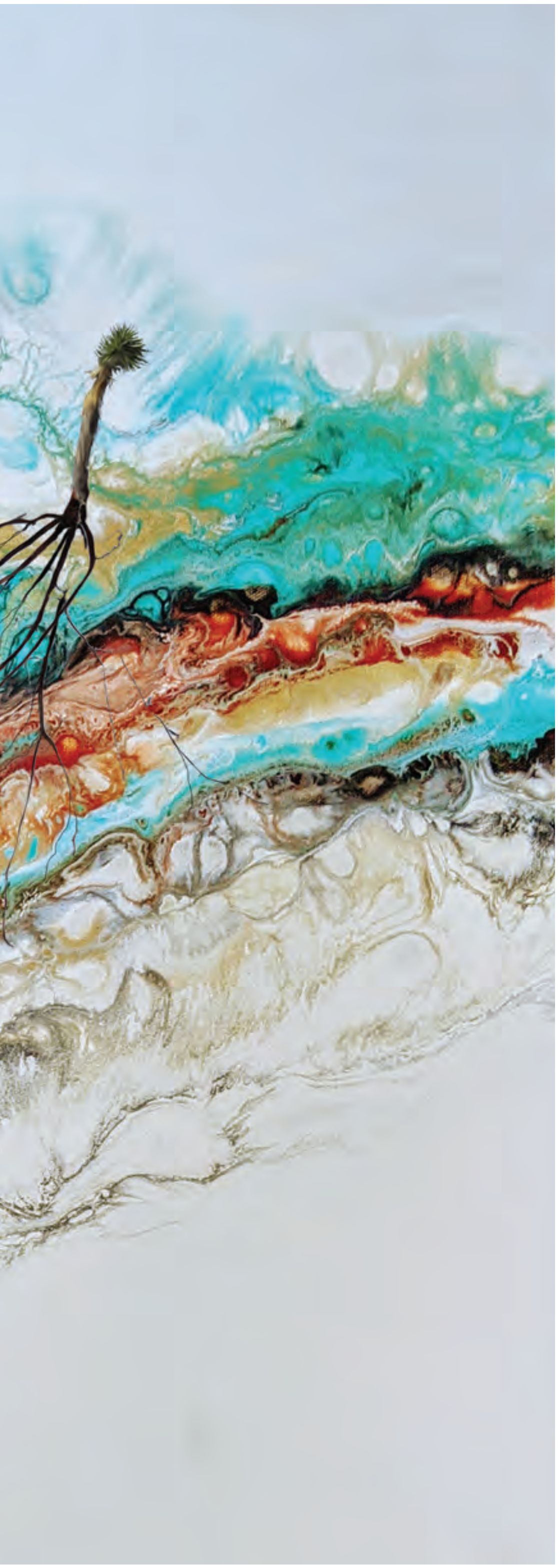
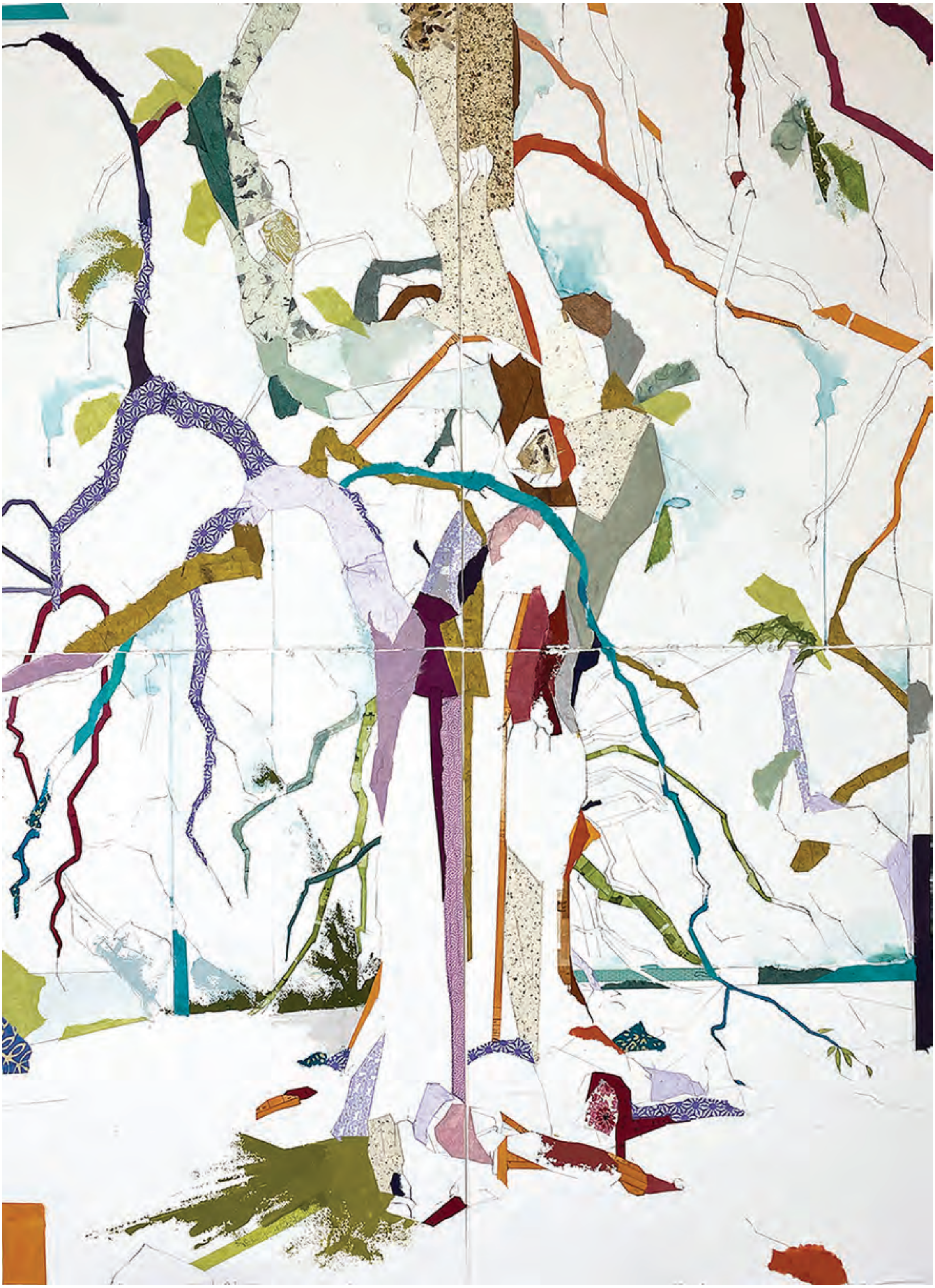


Susan Hoenig

Karey Kessler

THIS CYCLE
rain drifts down
a slow wisdom
he
ture
ROOTS
a delicate balance
HIDDEN

Nicole Kutz



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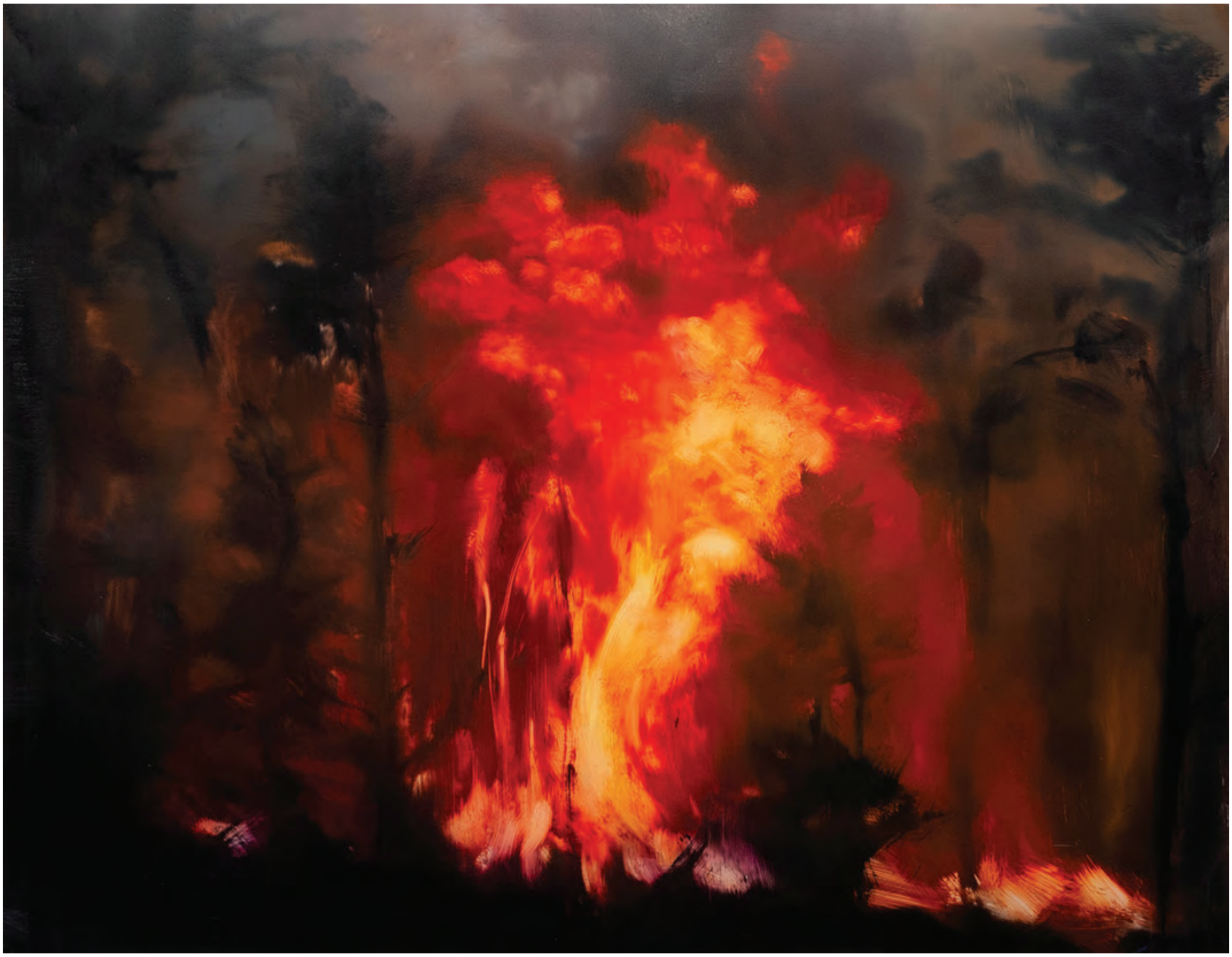
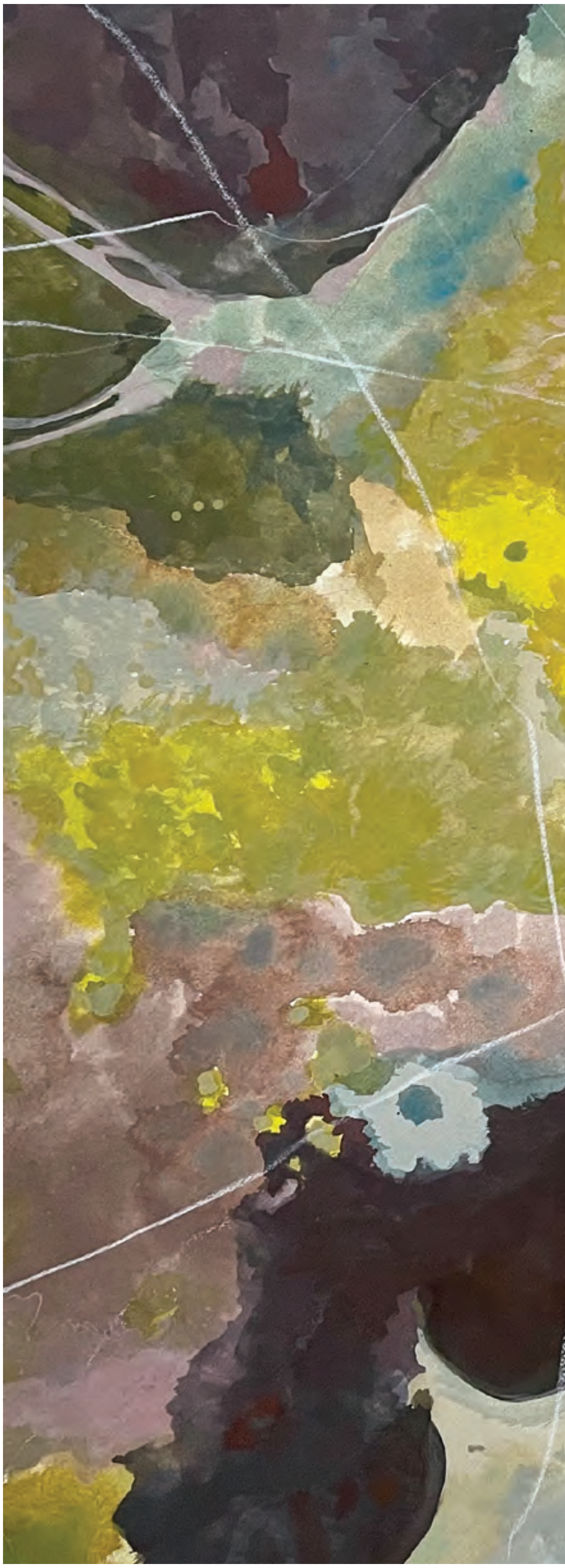
Linda MacDonald



Karen Marston



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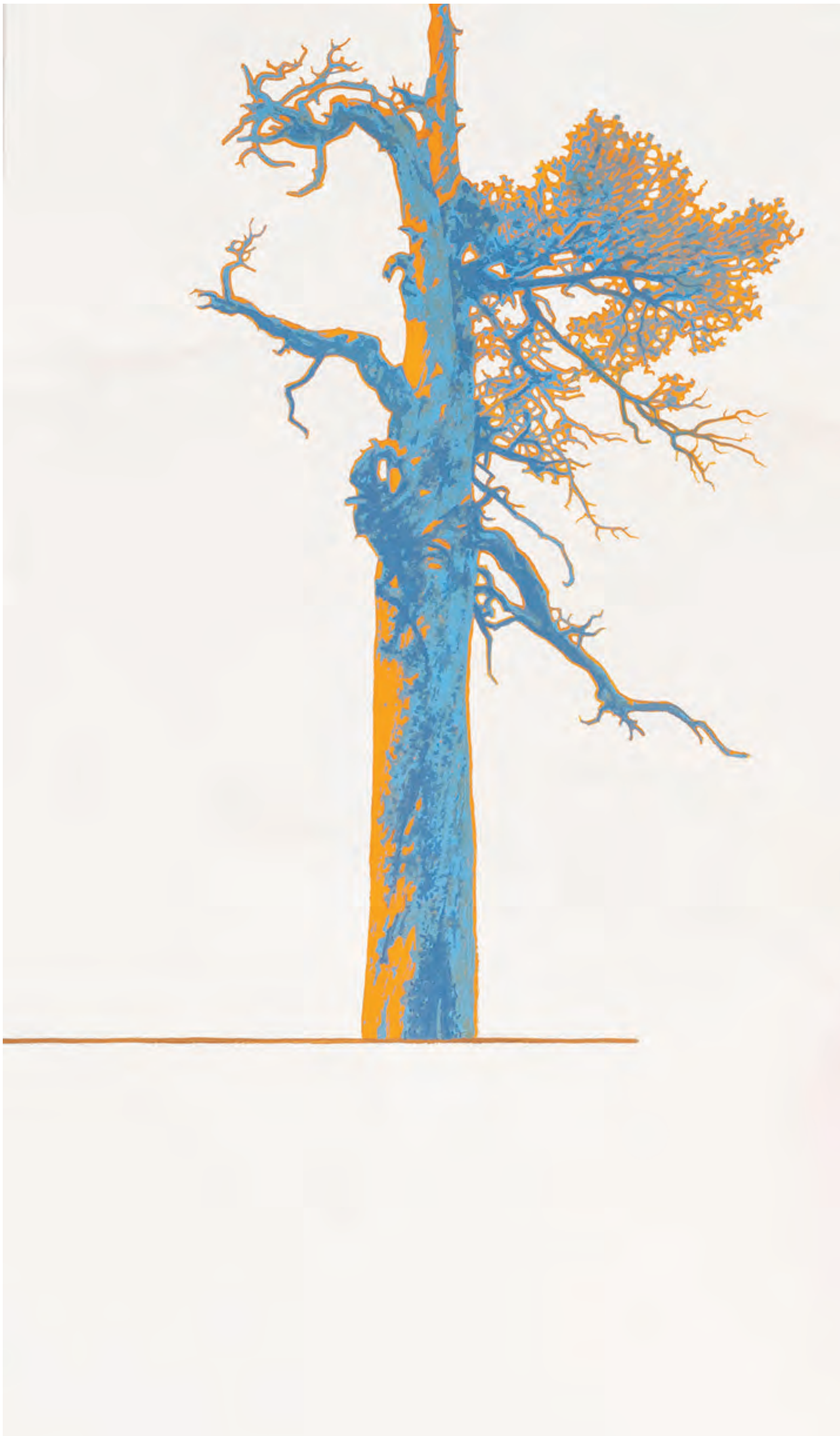
Mia Mulvey

Erika Osborne



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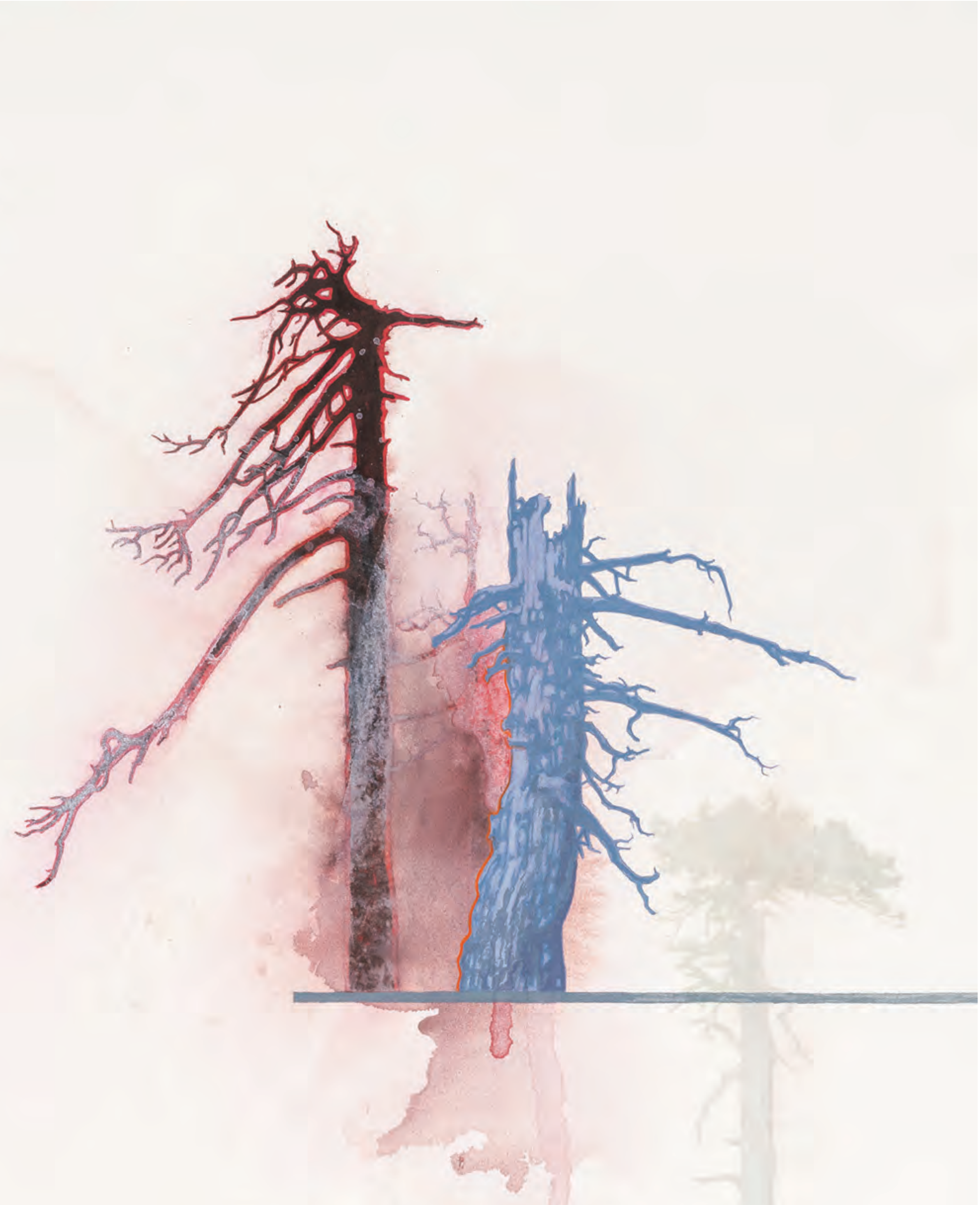

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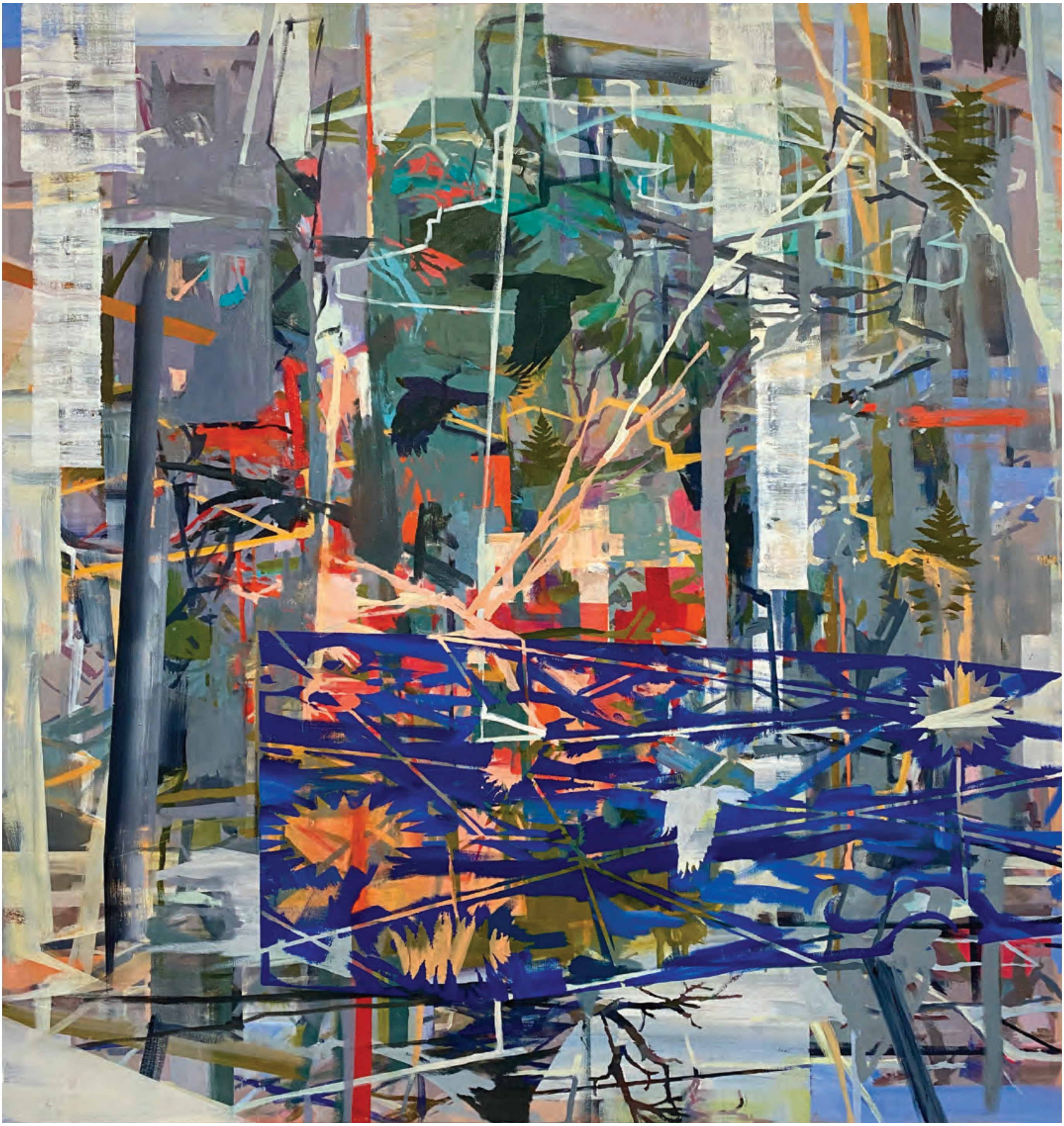

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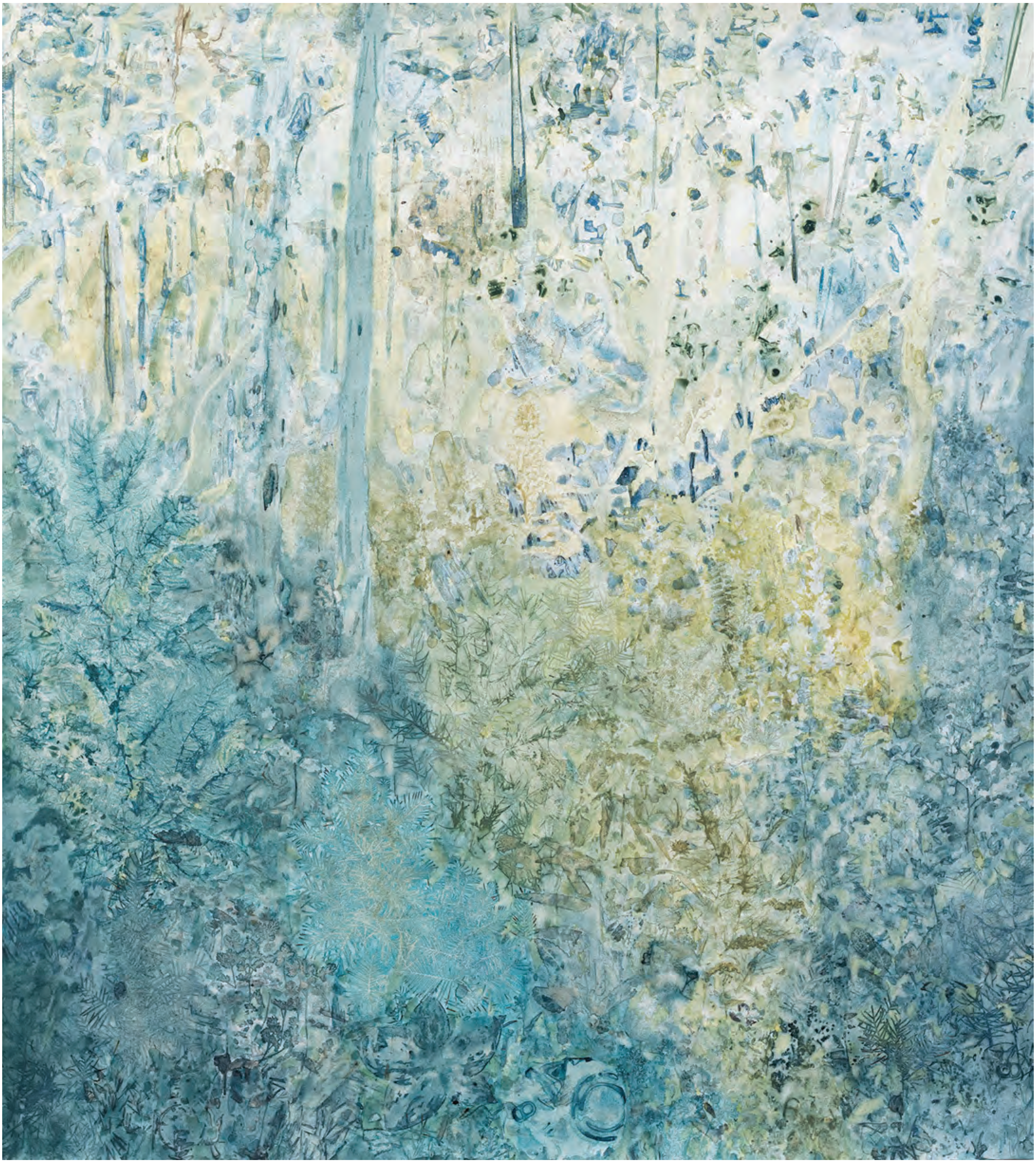
Deborah Wasserman



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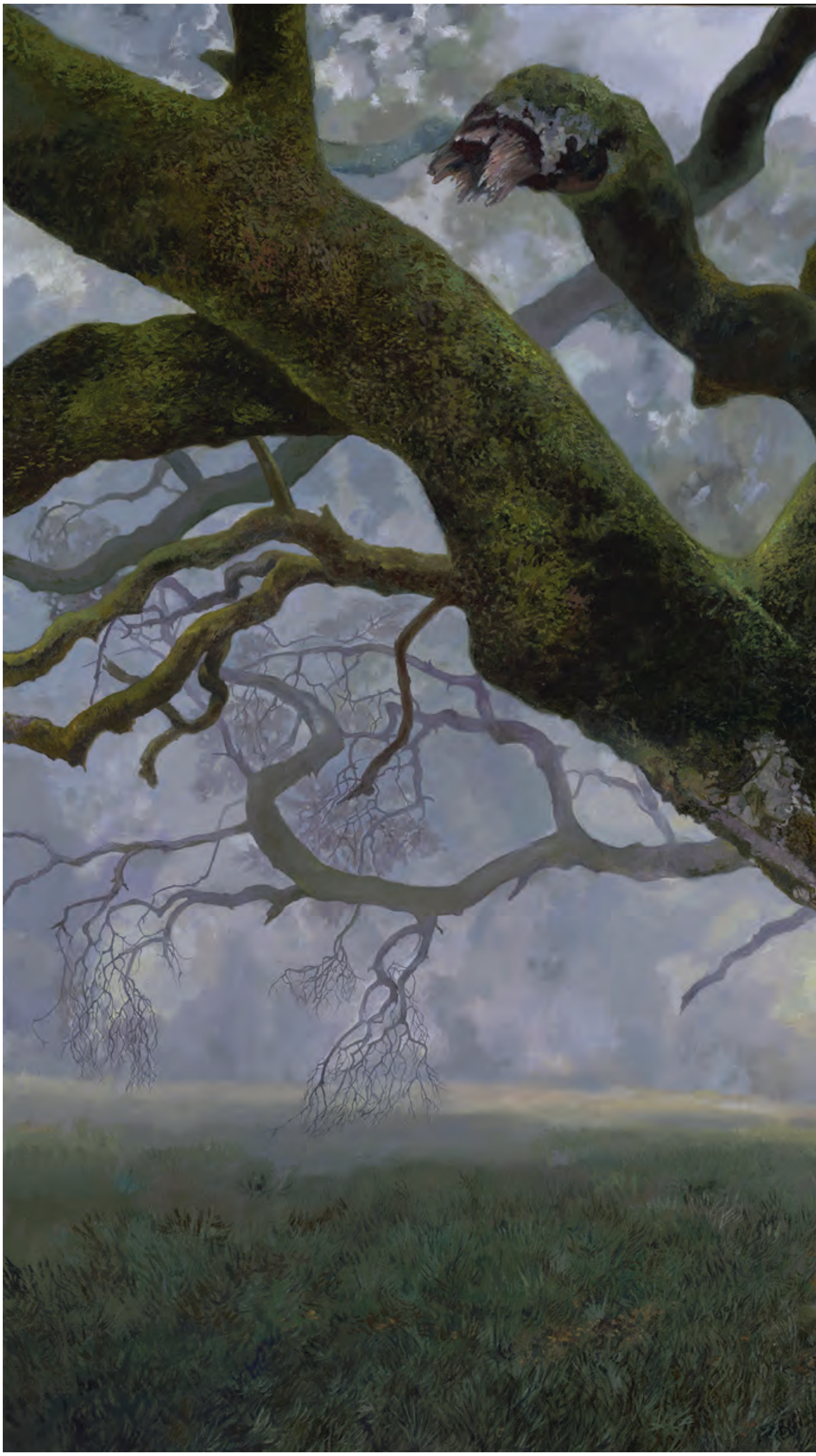

Adam Wolpert

Sculpture

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114 **Nancy Azara**
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120 **Nancy Evans**
122 **Rachel Frank**
124 **Annette Goodfriend**

Nancy Azara
(New York, United States)

***Ghost Ship*, 2016**
vine with gesso, paint and aluminum leaf on wood posts, 4 x 12 x 1.5 feet

I have been carving in wood for many years because I love trees. I have always admired trees, and I often, even as a child, thought that they held a metaphor for my experience of life. The sculpture I make is carved, assembled, and painted wood, often with gold, silver leaf, and encaustic. The sculpture records a journey of memory using wood, paint, and the layers they make up to convey images and ideas. I entwine my hands with tree leaves and add additional markings from other sources to translate a tactile sense onto the work, to experience the "nature" of the tree and its leaves and my own body's interaction with it. These components of my pieces serve as markers of my journey through life. My work has always been about the unseen and the unknown. A more recent constant is the cycles of time, the death of my mother, and the birth of my granddaughter.

nancyazara.com

Raina Belleau
(Tennessee, United States)

***American Elm*, 2018**
recycled cardboard, found objects, nylon fabric, nylon cord, paper, paper mache, recycled plastic bags, plasti-dip, tree stand, spray paint, wire, wood, 112 x 98 x 18 inches

Providence, Rhode Island, made all overnight street parking illegal years before I moved there. They wanted parking ticket revenue. Most backyards were converted to parking lots. The trees that dotted the streets were scraggly, and in summer, were festooned with yard sale pennants. I missed the large elms of my hometown, most of which are now dead from Dutch elm disease, casualties of urban monoculture. In the summers of my childhood, their trunks, weakened by disease, dropped limbs. The occasional windshield or screened-in porch was crushed under their weight. Summer storms toppled the city's elms like the plastic pins of children's bowling toys. Roots heaved chunks of sidewalk into ramps that my sister and I vaulted off while riding hand-me-down mountain bikes up and down the block.

rainabelleau.com

Tyler Burton
(California, United States)

***Silver Lining*, 2020**
wood, metal alloys, concrete, 108 x 20 x 10 inches

As our climate changes and the forests burn, what do the trees think? Do they realize the changes and think of a plan? Do the survivors grieve? Do they forgive us? These are all questions I think about as I walk through the woods. *Silver Lining* is a piece from my series "Artifacts of a Fire." The remnants of burnt tree trunks sourced from California wildfires are raised again, mounted on concrete, and embedded with metals, a figurative armor. Subtly transformed but retaining their sense of belonging to the landscape, these beautiful pieces of charred wood stand tall once again to speak for the trees, the forest, and the earth. They remain as artifacts and guardians of the landscape with the strength and the courage to persist through adversity.

etylerburton.com

Nancy Evans
(California, United States)

***Big Nose*, 2015**
aqua resin, 33 x 12 x 10 inches

This work "exists" in the fallen trunk of an Oak Tree in the San Bernardino Mountains of California and yet also exists as the legendary sea-creature in Hindu mythology, the Makara. Considered guardians of gateways and thresholds, this creature inhabits my artwork in a way that borders on the shamanistic and ethnographic. I am convinced that these symbols share a common foundation in ancient humans' encounters with the natural world, primordial and elemental, which evolved to reflect a collective cultural unconscious over time. As a process, I employ mold making, casting flexible materials, and recombining elements until the desired figure emerges. In *Big Nose*, I was surprised by its comical presence, which made me reflect on the importance of humor when considering our human interventions into the natural order.

nancyevans.me

Rachel Frank
(New York, United States)

***Mycelium Tree Offering Vessels 1*, 2021**
ceramic, thread, 21 x 49 x 23 inches

This piece is part of a series of hand-built ceramic works based on ancient Eurasian offering vessels. The works in this series use the forms of plant and animal indicator species, such as coral, mangroves, and turtles. Often inhabiting landscapes of both water and land, these species offer an early indication of environmental changes affecting the health of an ecosystem, such as pollution or climate change. In *Mycelium Tree Offering Vessels 1*, I visualize the offering vessel as a tool of movement and exchange similar to mycelia's role within an ecosystem. Trees use underground networks of fungal mycelia to communicate and share nutrients and information about insect invaders. Mycelia are also essential in an ecosystem to break down vegetative matter and remove chemicals and microorganisms from the soil and water but are susceptible to pollution within an environment.

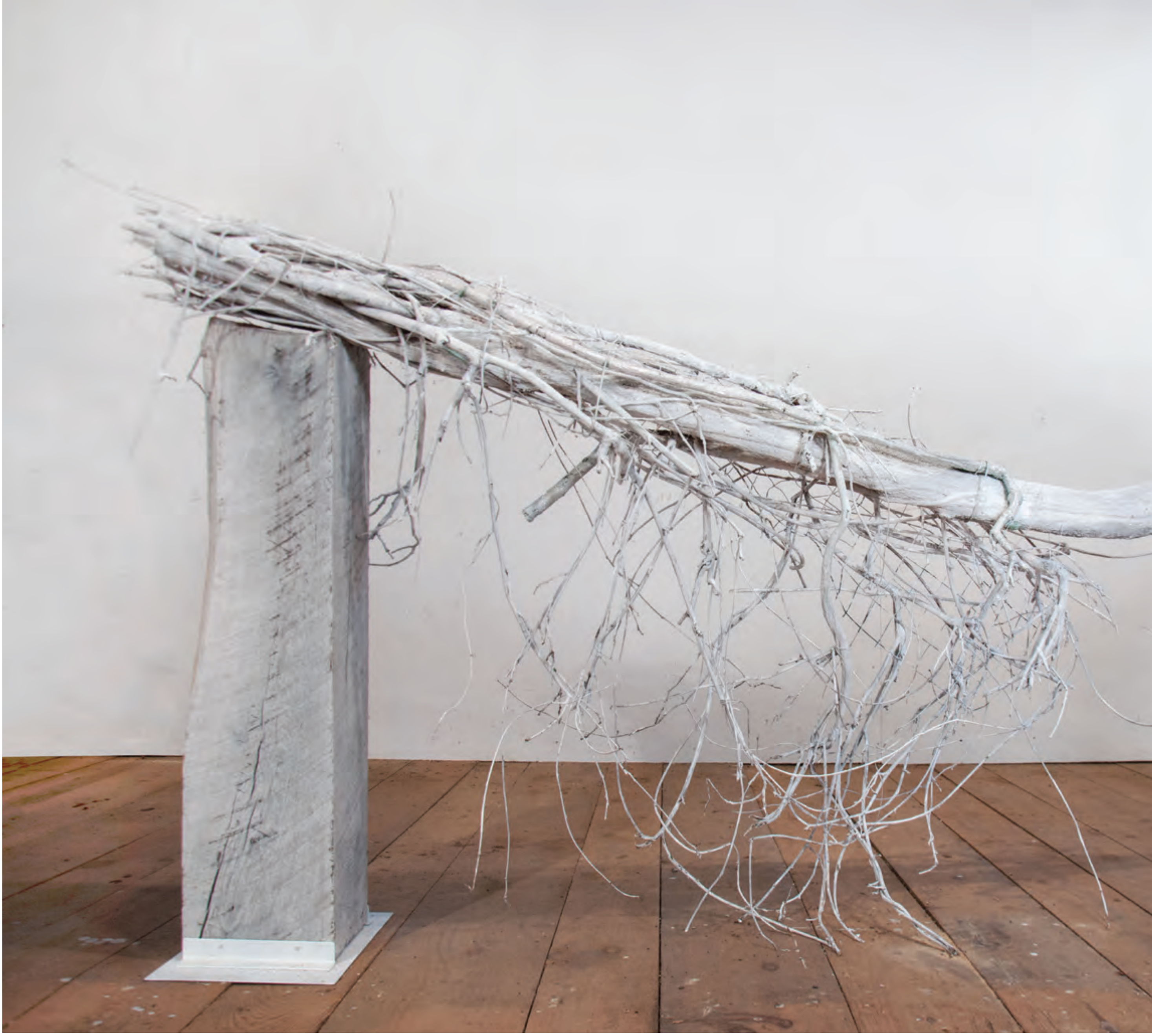
rachelfrank.com

Annette Goodfriend
(California, United States)

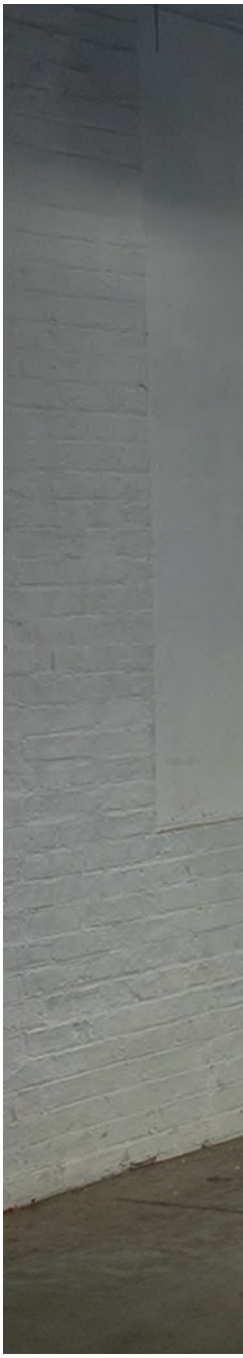
***Limb*, 2019**
silicone rubber, resin, lichen, 26 x 10 x 21 inches

I am fascinated by the perversity of nature. My work casts a surreal and scientific eye on the mutagenesis of form, from the cellular level to the limb. My recent work focuses on the intersection of man and nature, specifically exploring climate change and how our existence is now reliant upon an aggressive, active protection of the living planet. The actions of humans are destroying our natural environment, and only a deep understanding of our dependence upon it can save us. We no longer have the freedom to entertain the audacious notion that we can exist separately from the world we pollute. In that vein, I began working on a series of tree-human hybrids where trees grow limbs and organs, and human anatomy becomes a plant. *Limb* is the first in this series, made of cast silicone, resin, and lichen; it explores our inextricable interconnectivity with nature.

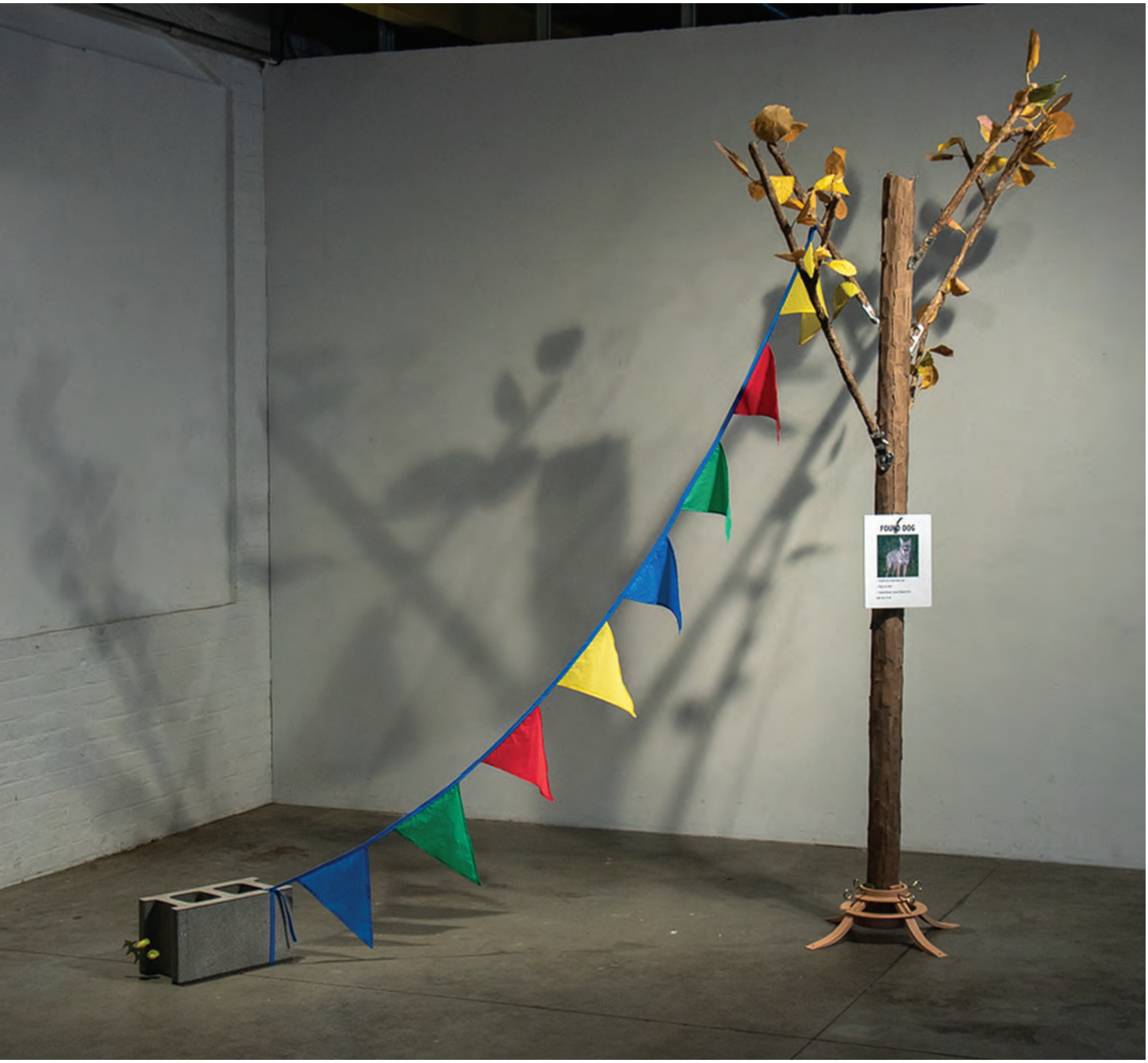
annettegoodfriend.com



Nancy Azara



Raina Belleau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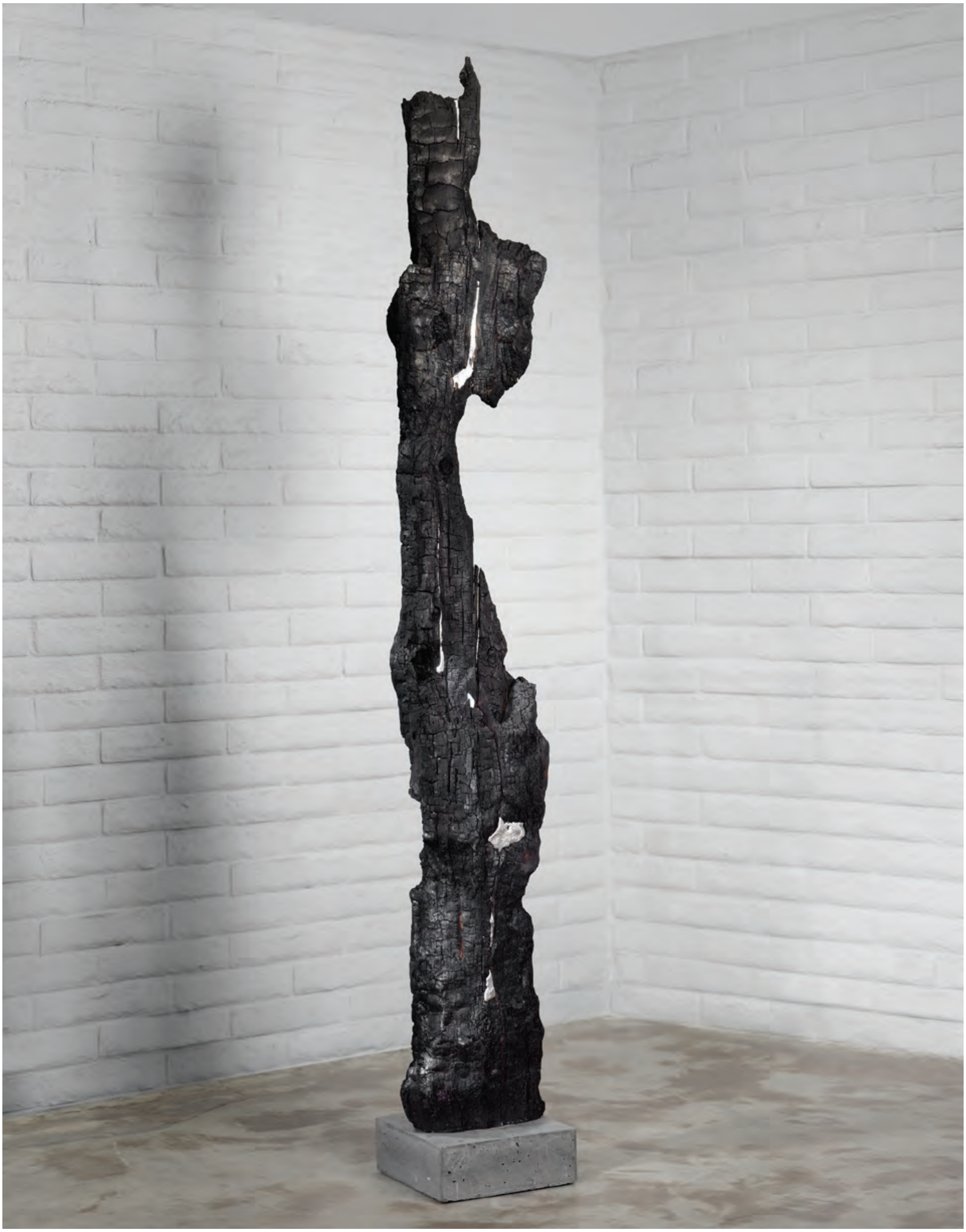
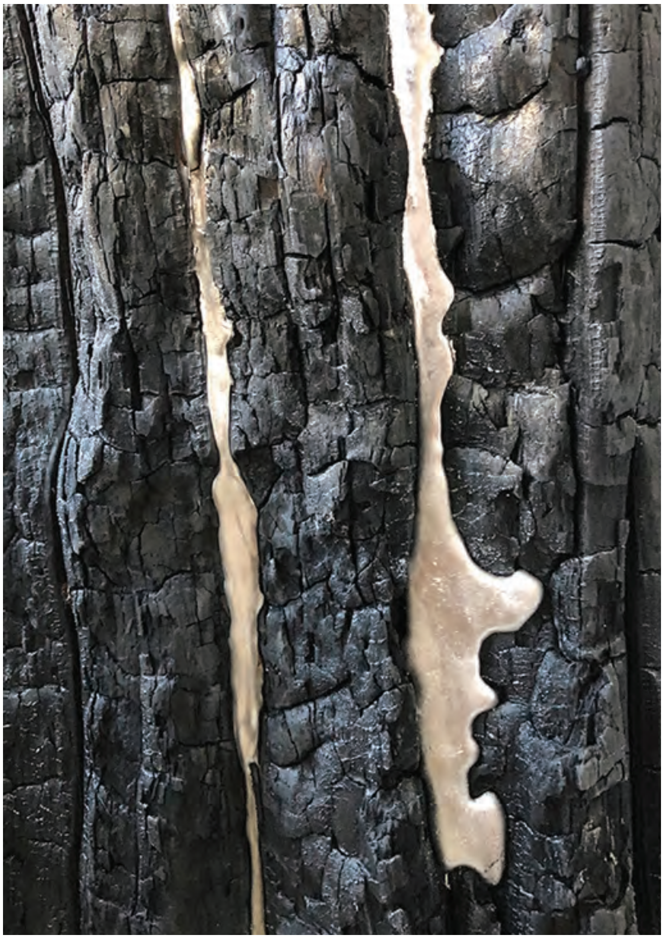
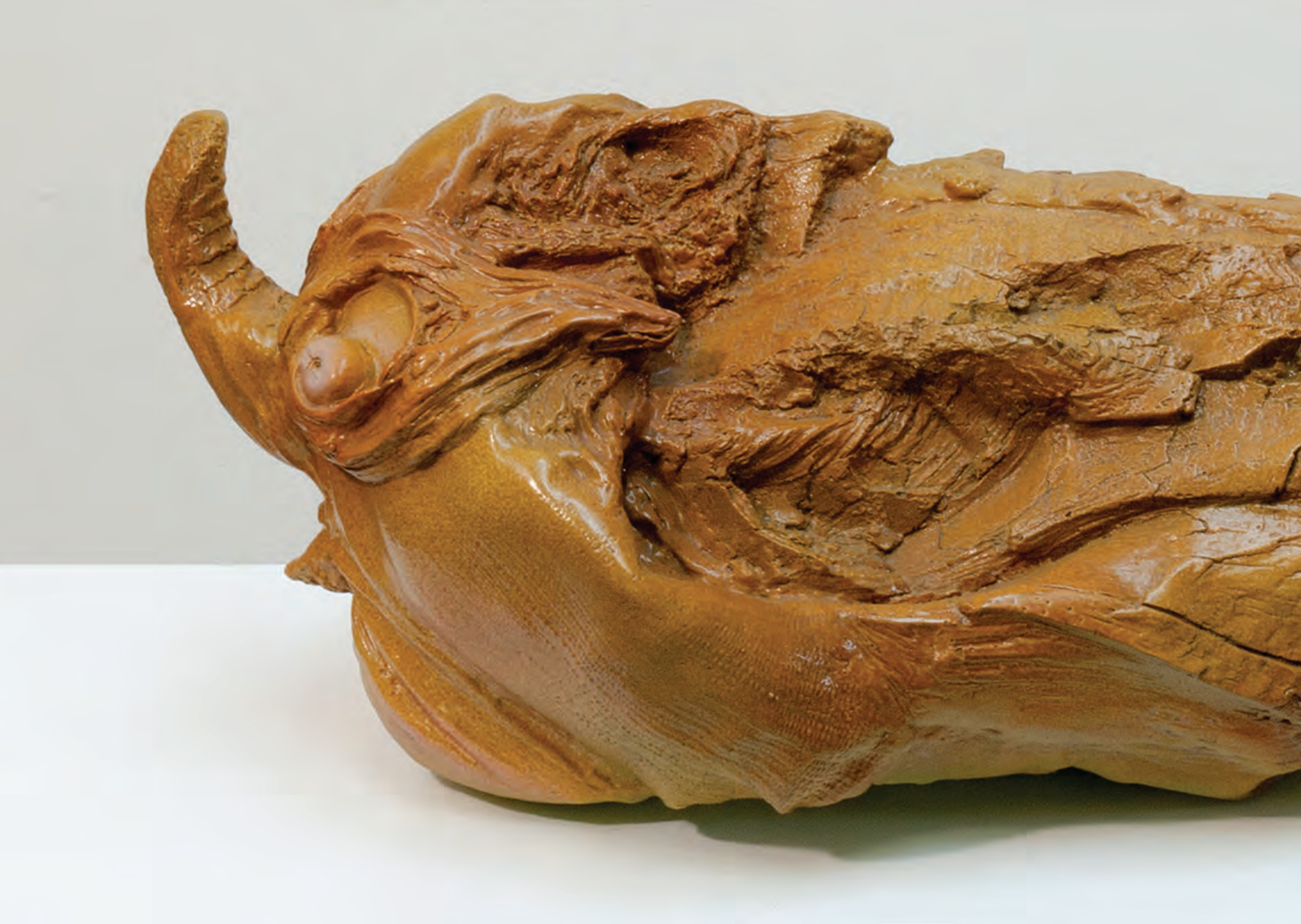


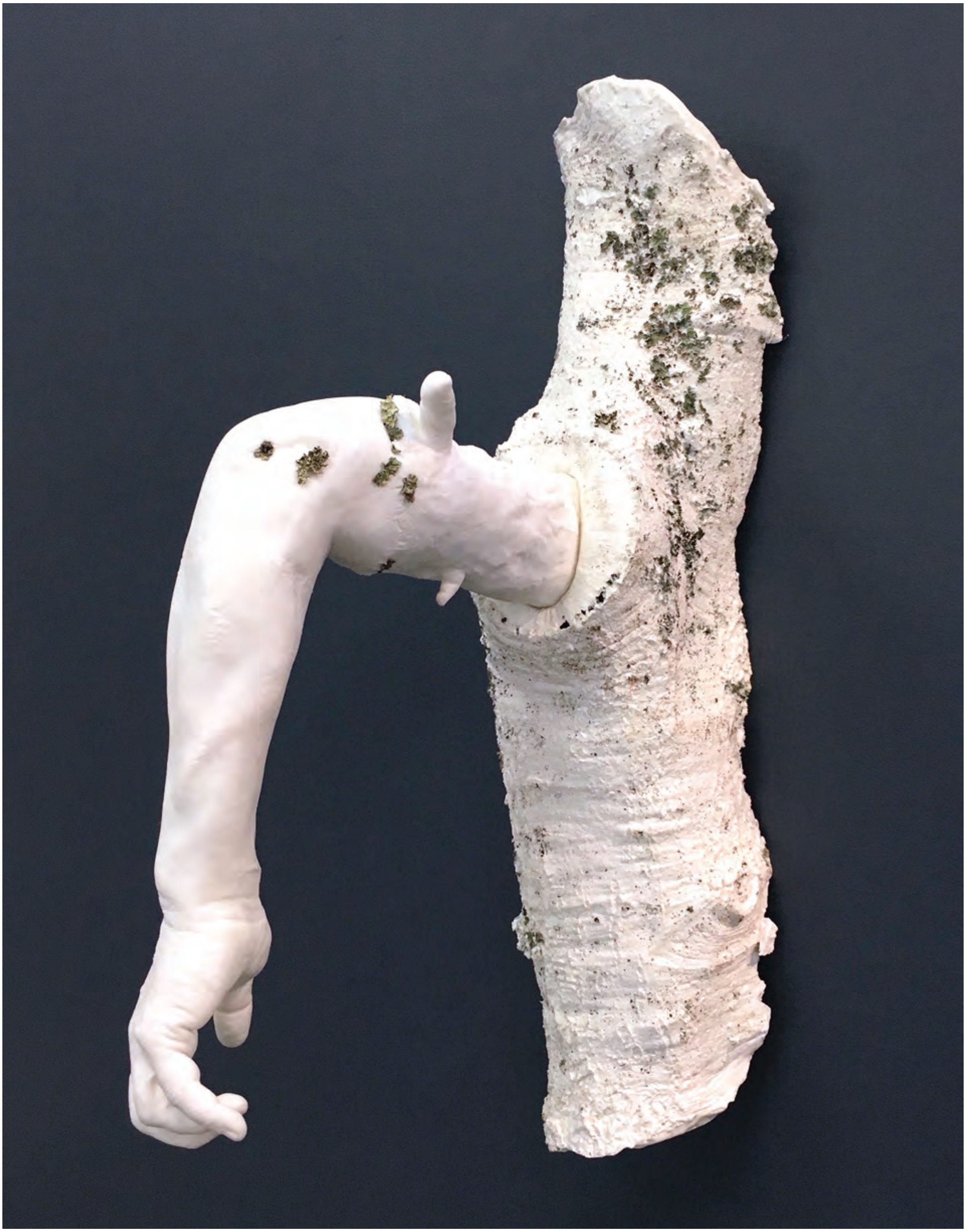
Tyler Burton





Nancy Evans

Rachel Frank



Annette Goodfriend

Drawing

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130 **Catherine Chalmers**
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134 **Catherine Ruane**
136 **Priscilla Stadler**
138 **Megan Teutschel**
140 **François Winants**

Catherine Chalmers
(Idaho, United States)

***Whitebark Pine, Sawtooths, ID*, 2021**
pencil and sap on paper, 10 x 8 inches

I recently started a new project focused on bark beetles and fire, an ecological system out of balance in the American West's conifer forests. From my base in Sun Valley, ID, I've been researching, meeting with the forest service, and hiking into the Sawtooth Mountains, where I gather images and collect material. Bark beetles engrave distinctive yet destructive patterns into the phloem, which I photograph and carve into woodblock prints. Sap, the lifeblood of a tree, weeps out when the tree is under beetle attack. I collect the excess to use in my Sap drawings. When a forest is stressed by drought, the trees cannot produce enough sap to protect themselves from invasion. The dead trees become fuel for catastrophic wildfires. I collect charcoal from burnt forests and grind it up to use as a watercolor medium for the Fire images.

catherinechalmers.com

Sarah Hearn
(Missouri, United States)

***Mycelium Network 6*, 2021**
drawing on paper, 14 x 10 inches

I am an interdisciplinary visual artist researching how humans can collaborate with, understand, and learn from nature. Through earnest investigations of biological life and natural phenomena, I make work that navigates shifting boundaries between science and science fiction. My practice is firmly rooted in drawing, photography, and installation, and at times incorporates the scientific method, collaboration, and public reciprocity. Riddled with intrigue and discovery, this work questions what it means to visualize biological life and phenomena that are often invisible to us at first glance. These three drawings focus on networks of life hidden under the forest floor in the form of mycelium hyphae and bacterial colonies. These invisible microbial and fungal communities regulate nutrient distribution among forests and trees and are primarily responsible for recycling decaying matter into the soil and eradicating pollutants from ecosystems. What can we learn from these vastly understudied life forms and their ancient networks of knowledge?

sarahhearn.art

Catherine Ruane
(California, United States)

***General Pico*, 2021**
graphite and charcoal on Lanaquarell cotton paper, 12 x 10 feet

I am exploring trees that have been present in human history. Witness Trees are long-lived surviving witnesses to the intensity of the human drama, such as existing in the middle of a Civil War Battlefield or an extra-judicial hanging. These trees, innocent bystanders, were co-opted into the chaos of a tragic event. What attracts me to these survivors is that despite the horror of human hate and fear, they not only survived, but they have thrived. General Andres Pico, in 1875 selected a California Sycamore branch to execute two men accused of being part of the infamous Flores Gang. They were hung from this tree one hot summer afternoon without the benefit of trial or jury. In recent years a wildfire burned away tall weeds exposing the plaque left to commemorate the actual deed and tree. The tree is standing tall and beautiful despite its gallows history.

catherineruane.com

Priscilla Stadler
(New York, United States)

***Rooted 14*, 2020**
drawing on scratchboard, 11 x 14 inches.

Intrigued by Dr. Suzanne Simard's research, I began envisioning the underground world of relationships among fungi, tree roots, and soil. "To listen is ... to touch a stethoscope to the skin of a landscape, to hear what stirs below," writes George David Haskell in *The Songs of Trees*. For the Rooted series, I use the "stethoscope" of intuitive imagining to represent underground exchanges and their intelligent, symbiotic behaviors. While investigating the multiple ways that soil, mycorrhizal networks, and roots are intertwined, I explore their relationships through visual processes that I term "intuitive research." Sensing that which is not seen, the Rooted drawings reference both science and the intangible.

priscillastadler.com

Megan E. Teutschel
(Washington, United States)

***Mushroom Guts*, 2019**
micron pen on paper, 36 x 48 inches

The Mushroom Body Collection was something that came out of a walk in the Hoh Rainforest, a magical place known for its old-growth trees, mosses, and mushrooms. What began as an exercise in anatomical and mycological illustration eventually came to feel as though it meant much more. I now look at this collection as a representation of change and growth. Mushrooms are the great decomposers—they break everything down so their pieces can be used as the building blocks for new life. I now see the Mushroom Body Collection as a metaphor for self-evolution: the allowance for the death of the old self and the new birth.

meganteutschel.com

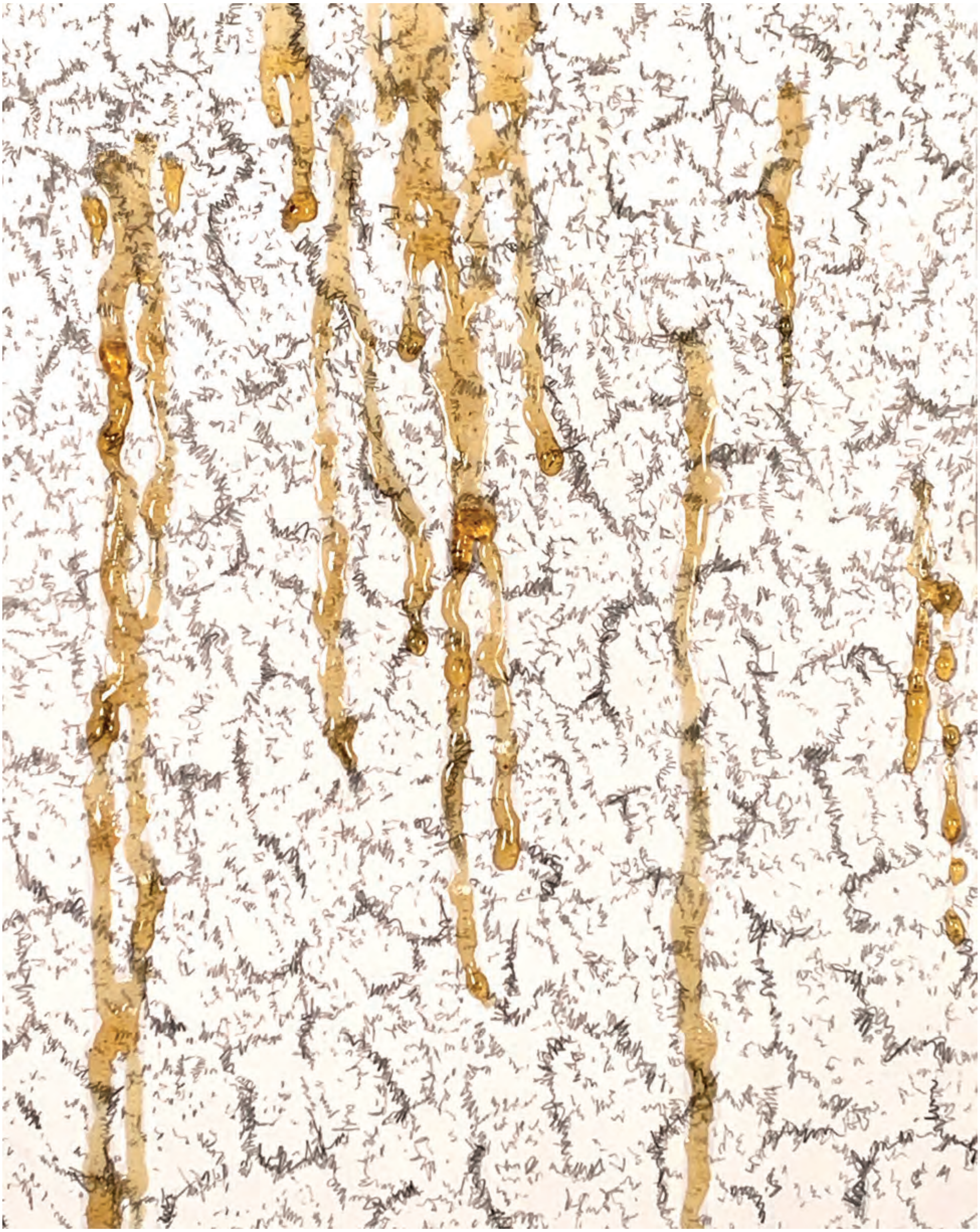
Francois Winants
(Belgium, Europe)

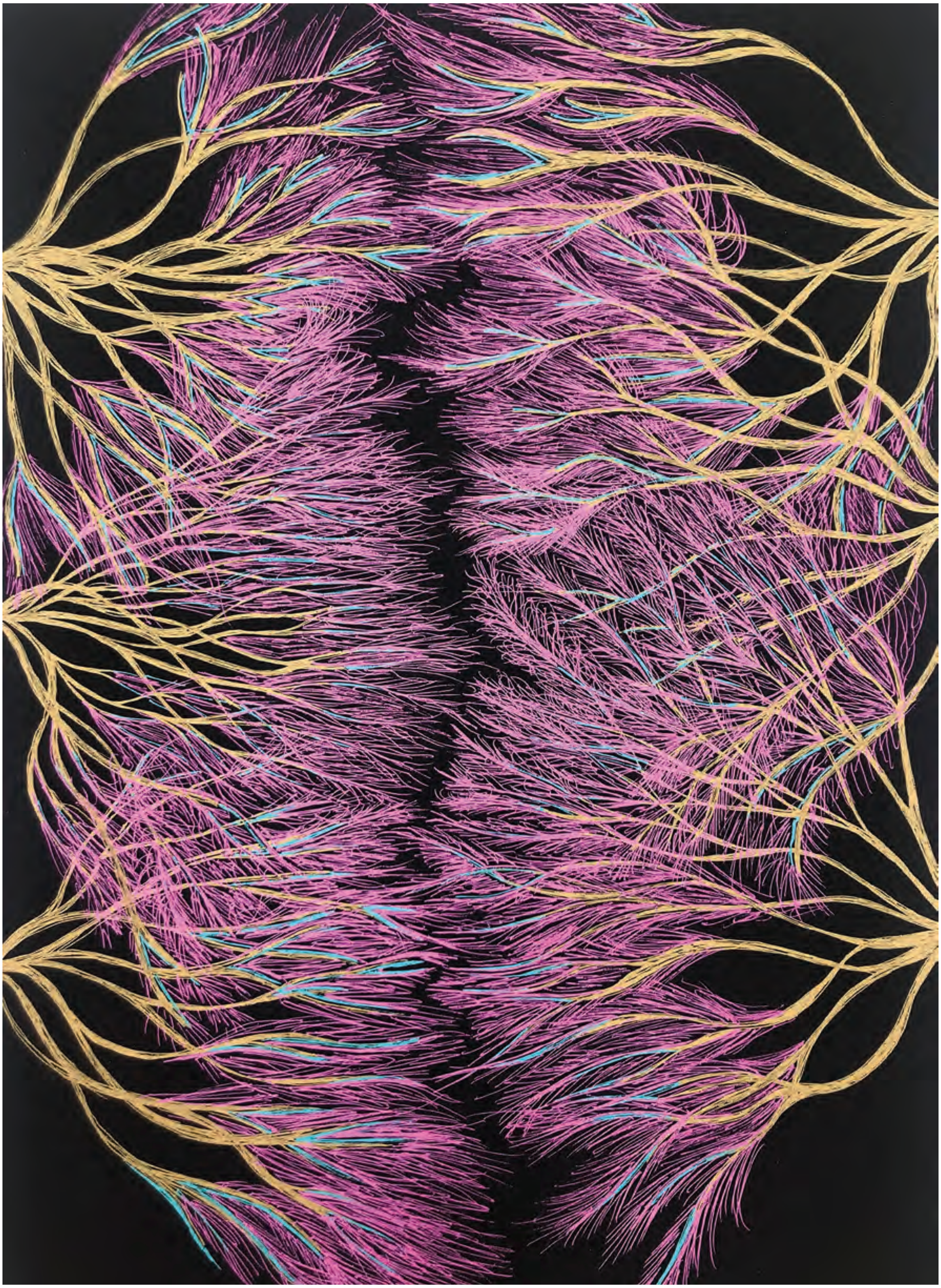
***Dessins des cimes*, 2020**
photograph of outdoor installation, 41 x 28 inches,
tracé de durée (drawings of duration) on paper
34 inches diameter

The project *Dessins des cimes* captures the movements and breathings from devices installed in forest environments close to the peaks. The drawings are made during long exposures by the movements of the massif and the implication of the climate. The paper is used as a breathable membrane reacting to humidity and captures natural elements such as pollen, the acidity of pine thorns. Hybrid devices inspired by scientific tools are the results of research based on observations of the environment. The environment is presented as a space for sensitive experiences; it questions the ways in which we inhabit the world and emphasizes the importance of considering the forces that inhabit it.

francoiswinants.com

Catherine Chalmers





Sarah Hearn

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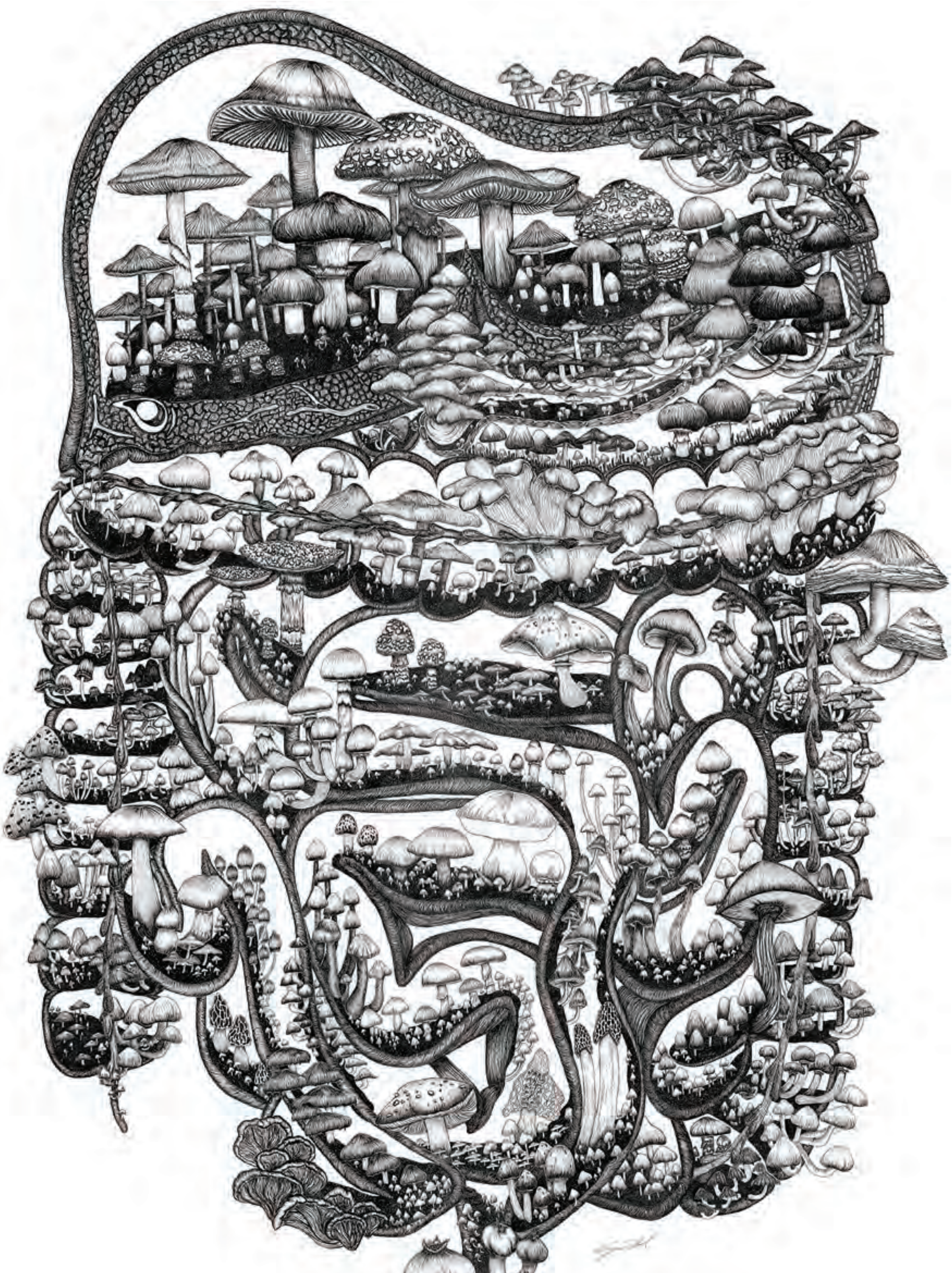
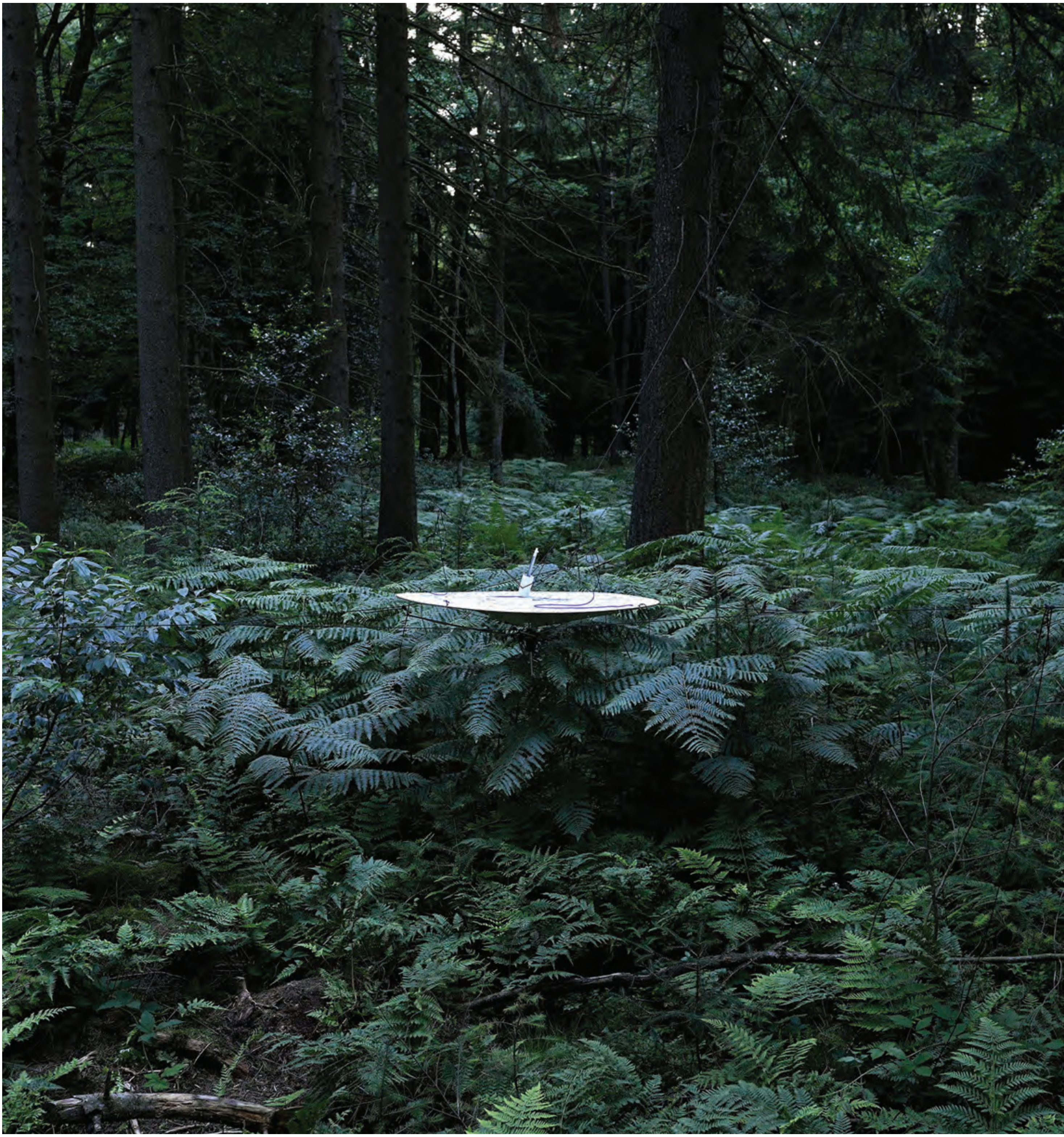
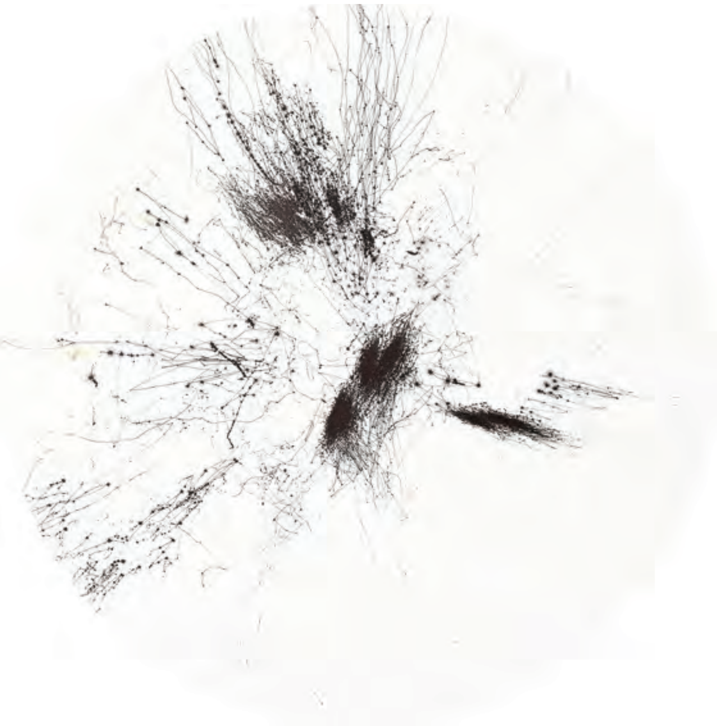




François Winants



Photography

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150 David Paul Bayles
152 Julianne Clark
154 A boneca conceitual
156 Robert Dash
158 Jimmy Fike
160 Dana Fritz
162 Bia Gayotto
164 Jennifer Gunlock
166 Margaret LeJeune
168 Chris Manfield
170 Aline Mare
172 Emmy Mikelson
174 Carol Paquet
176 Paula Pedrosa
178 Johnny Plastini
180 Laziza Rakhimova
182 Stuart Rome
184 Linda Smith
186 Krista Leigh Steinke
188 Claudia Tavares
190 Barry Underwood
192 Maria Whiteman

David Paul Bayles
(Oregon, United States)

***Hazard Tree #16*, 2021**
archival pigment print, 30 x 20 inches, edition of 7

Hazard Trees is a small part of a long-term project documenting post-fire recovery along the forested slopes of the McKenzie River Valley in Oregon. The trees are marked with orange, blue, or red colors that become more vivid when applied to the charred black bark. The cheerful hues belie their destiny: either sawmill or chipper. In the wake of the August 2020 Holiday Farm Fire, many question the policy of marking tens of thousands of trees along state highways as hazardous. It seems the hazard tree designation is merely a scheme, under the guise of safety, to profit while avoiding environmental concerns. Leaving burned trees helps the forest recover better over time. As they decompose, the standing burned trees replenish the soil organic matter, provide habitat for other plants and animals, sequester carbon on the land, helping to replace the thick layer of rich forest debris burned in the fire.

davidpaulbayles.com

Julianne Clark
(California, United States)

***Stairway to Heaven*, 2019**
inkjet print, 20 x 16 inches

I tell stories about family and the landscape through the lens of memory. I subvert the tradition of institutional collecting by creating a visual archive—an intimate narrative about familial connections to the land, particularly those that arise from matrilineal inheritance. I employ the visual language of archiving and natural history to question degenerative relationships with the land and how those relationships might connect to family and community trauma. Do we claim the land, or does it claim us? This interplay of schism and fusion symbolically represents the relationship between other generations and my own; we are both bonded and disconnected. I explore the constructs of landscape through the medium of photography, destabilizing the traditionally masculine framework of landscape imagery. My work highlights cultural, social, and environmental issues related to The South by focusing on distinct spaces within various landscapes therein.

julianneclark.com

A boneca conceitual
(Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

***Sapo*, (August) 2019**
digital photograph, 24 x 35 inches

photographer: Rogério Assis

I want to talk about humans being animals. Merely animals, zoologically speaking. No cultural approach, no philosophical system, no anthropological approach. Animal. Without the distinction of being "rational." It is not about forgetting that you are a human, but remember that first, we are animals, an unfortunate concept in the realms of civilization, made by people eager to detach themselves from Nature. My main work instrument is my body. This fat, shameless body provides me a certain latitude of unspoken symbolisms. So, if I can convey an animal with my movements and spirit, it can run deep through layers and layers into the audience's perception.

abonecaconceitual.wordpress.com

Robert Dash
(Washington, United States)

***Arbutus Seed*, 2017**
photographic montage of DSLR photos and scanning electron micrograph, 45 x 30 inches

Arbutus (Pacific madrone, madrona, Arbutus menziesii) is an iconic Pacific Northwest coast tree. It's twisting, sculptural limbs and stunning yearly peels of copper/red/green bark establish it as one of the most dramatic sights on rocky cliffs. Madrona berries are favorites of robins, thrushes, flickers, and chickadees in summer and winter. Fermented winter berries inspire a frenzied, entertaining sight as these birds careen from branch to branch. Increasing temperatures, drought, and dry soils impact Arbutus trees, with black fungus and leaf blight spreading and killing many prized specimens. This image features a dried arbutus seed as the dominant form, dwarfing the arbutus limbs. A backdrop of drooping arbutus leaves includes echoes of the moisture, which is increasingly rare during Pacific Northwest summers.

robertdash.com

Jimmy Fike
(Arizona, United States)

***White Pine, from the Photographic Survey of the Wild Edible Botanicals of the North American Continent*, 2020**
archival print, 20 x 20 inches

My photographs help viewers identify free food growing abundantly in their local ecosystems. I hope this can help foster a sense of connection and environmental stewardship. Beyond this functionality, I imbue the images with a contemplative aesthetic—opening a space to glimpse the transformational processes of symbiotic evolution and dependent origination. I have illustrated the edible parts of the specimen in color. White Pine has a long history of usage as food and medicine. By brewing the needles, one can make a tea high in Vitamin C. The inner bark, nuts, sap, immature cones, and young shoots are all edible. White Pine or Pinus strobus is a truly remarkable tree and friend.

jimmyfike.com

Dana Fritz
(Nebraska, United States)

***Fire Tower View*, 2019**
archival pigment print, 16 x 40 inches

Photographs in "Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape" make visible forces that shaped the Nebraska National Forest at Halsey, once the world's largest hand-planted forest. Wind, water, planting, thinning, burning, decomposing, and sowing contributes to this conifer forest's unique environmental history in a semi-arid grassland. The on-site nursery that once produced trees for the new forest now grows replacement seedlings for burned and beetle-damaged National Forests in the Rocky Mountain region and the Nebraska Conservation Trees Program, but none for the adjacent forest. This hybrid landscape has evolved from a turn of the 20th-century experiment to reclaim with trees what was called "The Great American Desert" to a 21st-century project of conservation, grassland restoration, and native reforestation.

danafritz.com

Bia Gayotto
(California, United States)

***Memoir*, 2020**
C-print, 18 x 14 inches

Memoirs is a series of color photographs of decaying logs found in Northern California's redwood forest. In post-production, I use a process that filters light, and like an X-ray, reveals details not seen by the naked eye. The scars, lines and stains that become visible through this process depict a map, fingerprint, or historical account of the tree's life. The blue-purplish colors emerge by inverting the positive image into negative —the original yellow color of tannins still present in the trees' bark turns into the opposite color of the spectrum, evoking water. Another crucial element is the log's surprising ability to regenerate. When a redwood is damaged by human activity or natural causes, it sends out sprouts around its stump for new trees to emerge. Living trees rely on decaying logs, which embody renewal and resistance, life and decay, connectivity and survival.

biagayotto.com

Jennifer Gunlock
(California, United States)

***Pacific Northwest Series II*, 2021**
digital collage, 21 x 20 inches

The Pacific Northwest Series reveals how trees and natural ecosystems are regarded and manipulated in contemporary Western culture. Our economic obsession with ownership and dominance, its perpetual need to domesticize Nature instead of working in partnership with it, is awkwardly expressed. By digitally collaging photographs taken while traveling, I construct trees and landscapes fused with architectural motifs. The work comments on humanity's direct impact on the environment, as well as Earth's interminable shapeshifting over the long history of its existence.

jennifergunlock.com

Margaret LeJeune
(Illinois, United States)

***Birdsong 2, Shifting Halo Series*, 2019**
archival inkjet print, 24 x 18 inches

The images in Shifting Halo series document how climate change and logging practices are impacting the Boreal Forest. This woodland biome, also known as the Emerald Halo, circles the northern portion of the globe. The photographic works draw attention to the damage caused by clearcutting, including the release of carbon stored in the soil and trees and the destruction of resident bird habitat. Soundwaves of Boreal Chickadee calls punctuate several images in this series to silently echo the depleting number of avian species in this shifting landscape. This work was created as part of an artist residency at the University of Notre Dame's Environmental Research Center (UNDERC).

margaretlejeune.com

Chris Manfield
(California, United States)

***Portrait of Sequoia*, 2021**
burnt hair, charred Sequoia bark, gum bichromate print on paper, 8 x 10 inches

My first child was born soon after we moved to the East Coast during the immigration crisis following the most destructive wildfire in the history of California in 2018. We named our child Sequoia after the pyrophyte (fire-dependent trees) that have been species' homes from multiple kingdoms of organisms since the Triassic period. Ironically, the Sequoiadendron Giganteum (Giant Sequoia) are currently endangered due to habitat loss and suppression of wildfires. The wildfires that have sprawled across California were the unfamiliar force that has allowed me to reflect on my diaspora (as an immigrant father to my American-born child) through a universal narrative of immigration and displacement. By accepting our universal relationship with the greater ecosystem as an integral part of our political discourses, we can begin to address the meaning of environmental justice and sustainability.

chrismanfield.com

Aline Mare
(California, United States)

***Branching Out*, 2019**
unique painted print, 24 x 32 inches

My work over the last decade has explored the poetic and metaphoric language of plants and trees and their morphic resemblance to our bodies. How their roots mirror our arterial systems and the veins of a leaf—like our own veins—carrying nutrients and energy throughout our bodies to keep us alive. Recent work incorporates kapok material from the local Ceiba tree in Los Angeles and the clouds of silky floss full of seeds released every spring to be carried in the wind and take root. I have used this material in my printing and painting processes on paper, metal, and canvas—incorporating the floss and other plant matter such as roots, lichen and moss to create metaphors that speak to a sense of the sacred and magical relationship between humans and plant life.

alinemare.com

Emmy Mikelson
(New York, United States)

***Blind Forest (Dusk)*, 2018**
ink, pen, digital photograph, 11 x 18 inches

My work focuses on developing a visual language that explores the entanglements between humans, non-humans and the environment. In the Blind Forest series, I combine digitally rendered moiré patterns, intricate ink drawings and photographs of a rainforest ecosystem. The resulting imagery describes the confluent and splintering dynamics between natural and artificial systems and their hallucinatory qualities. The visual layers disguising the photographic image is an embodiment of the hidden networks and senses that are not immediately accessible to passive human perception.

emmymikelson.net

Carol Paquet
(California, United States)

***Shrouded Green*, 2020**
photo collage, 70 x 40 inches

I am deeply aware of a finite planet and diminishing resources, which plays into my work in unexpected ways. However, it is not by design as I work in a very intuitive way, guided by the moment. I live near the Pacific Ocean and am galvanized and buoyed by the beauty around me. But this torques with the relentless information feed of the news cycle, climatic change, heat waves, floods and more. So I lower the volume and dive into an imaginary landscape. Using a camera renowned for documenting without bias and with honesty, I instead use it to create fictional landscapes loosened from the bonds of reality. My work culls and distorts everyday images and plays with scale and orientation, repetition, and incongruence. I explore collage and layering in my process to create a familiar landscape—yet not of this world.

carolpaquet.com

Paula Pedrosa
(São Paulo, Brazil)

***Diorama*, 2015**
photograph, 24 x 35 inches

I'm a visual artist and naturalist based in São Paulo, Brazil, using photography as a creative extension of my formal training in natural sciences. In my projects, I investigate the contemporary notions of nature, interweaving disciplines such as science, history, philosophy, and art. My work depicts scenes and landscapes that emphasize the tension between natural and artificial, reality and fiction. For my project called *Diorama*, developed at the São Paulo Aquarium, where natural and artificial come together in such an intrinsic way that they can no longer be distinguished, producing environments that are at the once oddly cozy and surreal. *Diorama* represents the human craving to connect with nature, and thus with forests, albeit in controlled environments that cannot hide the coldness of our nature.

pedpaula.com/en

Johnny Plastini
(Colorado, United States)

***Symbiont Culture #4454*, 2021**
CMYK Eco-UV print on handmade paper,
16 x 24 inches
location: 36°59'34.9"N 14°31'51.9"E
Vittoria. Sicily, Italy
approximate elevation: 630 ft

Lichens (composite organisms of fungi, algae, and cyanobacteria) symbiotically engage with our forests. Plastini seeks to document lichen species nationally and internationally in locations which have experienced tumultuous histories. Specifically, the coastal wildfire regions of California, the front range and alpine tundra ecosystems of Colorado, and the vinicultural volcanic shrublands of Sicily and Greece. Ongoing fieldwork narrates symbiotic lichen cultures through the lens of scientific and anthropological definitions of culture: (1) a collection of cells in a suitable condition for growth, (2) the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular people or social group. Each full-color image printed on handmade paper is produced through an eco-friendly and sustainable process known as Eco-UV printing, a 21st-century adaptation of 19th century CMYK chromolithography methods. The portfolio of images hypothesizes that human communities could evolve into a more mutually beneficial state, apart from the exploitative capitalist strategies of previous generations.

johnnyplastini.carbonmade.com

Laziza Rakhimova
(New York, United States)

***Sumac, Radiating Heat Series*, 2020**
chromogenic infrared print, 24 x 18 inches

Focusing your camera on a city park at any time of the year can ignite a blaze of lights and spools of color just above the spectrum of human sight. Prospect Park's unseen array is composed of a stunning orange, cobalt blue and cadmium red—an altered reality captured in the blink of the camera's shutter. Nature exudes a spectrum of light waves and colors which escape the eye but are ever-present in the world we inhabit. Green trees, plants, and clouds reflect intense waves of infrared light, which plays a big role in "designing nature" by refining all the nature subtleties. Designers Olmsted and Vaux seized the unseen portraiture in Prospect Park by honoring the aesthetic of paintings. These graphic poeticized and abstracted into nature motif images reminiscent of rimpa (a school of Japanese painting) pay tribute to the illusionary aesthetic of this monumental urban expanse.

seeingthroughnewyork.art

Stuart Rome
(Pennsylvania, United States)

***H12 Wells 1–6*, 2012/19**
silver gelatin print, 19 x 19 inches

Over the last decade, I made these photographs with and inside living, giant redwoods, and sequoia trees. Some of the trees are over three thousand years old and are a small remnant of their once wide-spread species. Though hollow, these trees remain very much alive; their dark charcoal interiors lit only by brief sunlight reveal shapes that suggest a passageway to an underworld. They are places to make contact with the powers and forces that will eventually make their way into the world of light. In previous work, I photographed in distant places such as Latin America and Indonesia and observed the relationships between peoples and their environments. I documented ceremonies that revealed an active dialog with Nature, achieved through trance and possession. This experience led me to develop an alternate way of seeing the natural world as a communicating entity and the landscape containing intelligible living patterns.

stuartrome.com

Linda Smith
(New York, United States)

***Concord 2*, 2020**
photograph, 9 x 12 inches

The places I photograph hold spaces of significant traumas that have endured wars and massive deaths. Within these landscapes are trees I am drawn to because they contain some of these traumas that the land has experienced, but they also hold remarkable resilience and rebirth. Even under enormous pressures environmentally and ecologically, these trees hold stories that preceded us and will continue to carry them after us. The series is called "It's in the Trees."

lindacsmith.com

Krista Leigh Steinke
(Texas, United States)

***On the Breath of a Forest*, 2014**
pinhole photographs mounted on wood panel,
6 x 8 inch panels, grid variable.

This project is based on a wooded region in rural New York. To create this work, homemade pinhole cameras were distributed throughout the trees in a forest where they were left outside for the entire summer to be weathered by the natural elements. They were rained on, heated by the sun, blown by the wind, and embedded with bugs, leaves, spider webs, and dirt. Here, I am not so much interested in the single perfect exposure as much as how the results work together to capture the pulse of a place—the rhythm of the sun rising and setting, the textures, palette, and the physical remnants found within this unique ecosystem. In the resulting work, lines move through the composition like veins or air passages, drawing parallels to the human body and portraying the forest as a living creature.

kristasteinke.com

Claudia Tavares
(Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

***Nocturnal 1*, 2018–2020**
photograph, 24 x 16 inches

Nocturnal is a series of four photographs taken in the Amazon Forest during my LabVerde residency in 2018 in Brazil. The light that highlights a specific species from the darkness is the light in the eyes of those who know how to see, whether they are natives, scientists, biologists, or artists. Nocturnal also refers to the forest's nightlife, invisible to human eyes yet very vivid by their sounds. The images are a metaphor for the care and distinction of forest species, highlighting the diversity of native vegetation.

claudiatavares.com

Barry Underwood
(Ohio, United States)

***Deford Logs*, 2019**
pigment print, 28 x 50 inches

I strive to foster awareness of environmental change by engaging viewers in unexpected visual hypotheses, offering novel lenses through which to consider the impact of human action on our surroundings, both locally and on a larger scale. I aim for my work to be a platform for conversations concerning environmental issues, using tropes of aesthetic beauty to reach across binary ideological lines. The work is a series of long-exposure photographic images of sculptural structures built on-site in specific landscapes. The photographic prints are highly aestheticized poetic gestures, emphasizing the interrelationship between the underlying terrain and human incursions into a given location. Conceptually the work is situated at the intersection of Land Art, Staged Photography, and Minimalist Sculpture. My photographs reflect human disturbances through shapes, lines, light, geometry and especially color. Metaphorically, they suggest how society divides and surveys landscapes or how we humans impose our vision on the natural environment.

barryunderwood.com

Maria Whiteman
(Indiana, United States)

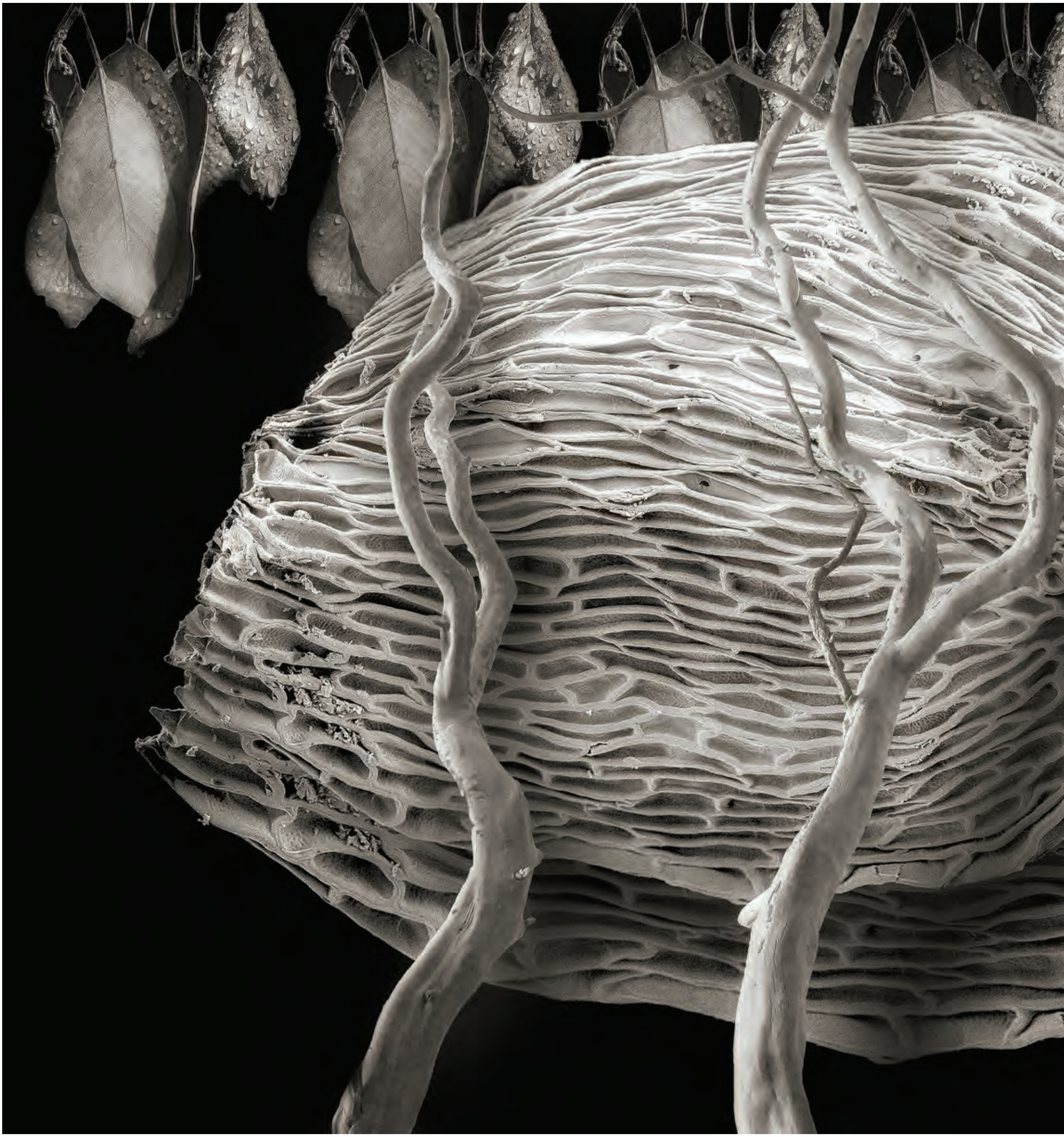
***Transspecies 2*, 2018–2021**
digital print, 24 x 42 inches

The Transspecies series emerged from the concept of the wood wide web's entanglement with the forest; it narrates a story about discovering the fungal kingdom and "going fungal." Transspecies emphasize the healing properties of fungi, mushrooms, and mycelia, pointing out that they affirm our entanglement with other species. Attached to the man's body are turkey tails, a traditional Chinese medicine used to boost the immune system. We may think of body armor or a protective shell covering vulnerable human skin in this context. The image has the futuristic touch of a mutant body designed for humans living in a fragile ecology. In light of the supreme healing power of mushrooms, we may think of a futuristic human species, ecologically enhanced by a type of genetic engineering that endows them with fungal capacities of healing, if not with ecological foresight.

mariawhiteman.squarespace.com

David Paul Bayles

Julianne Clark



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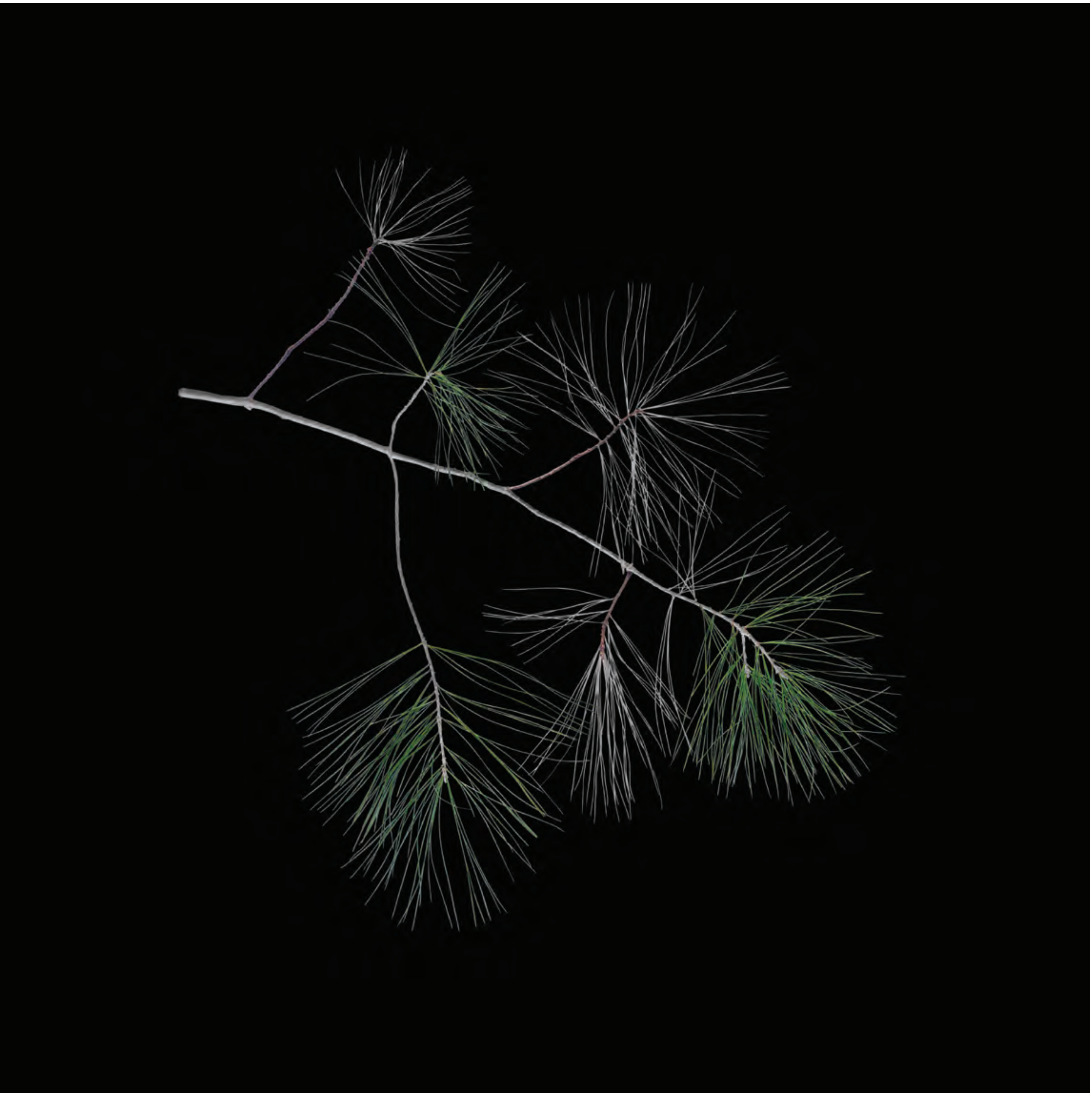

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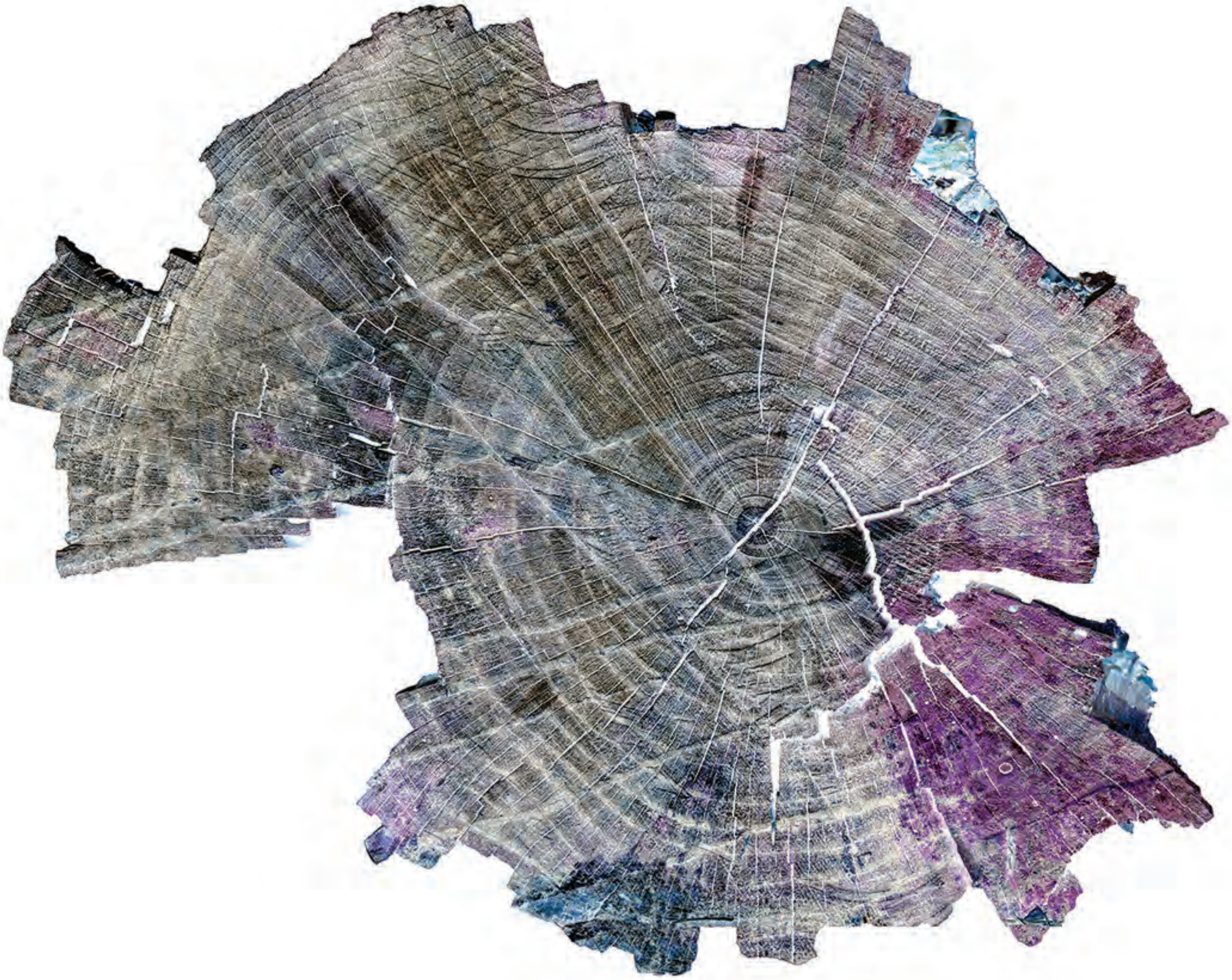

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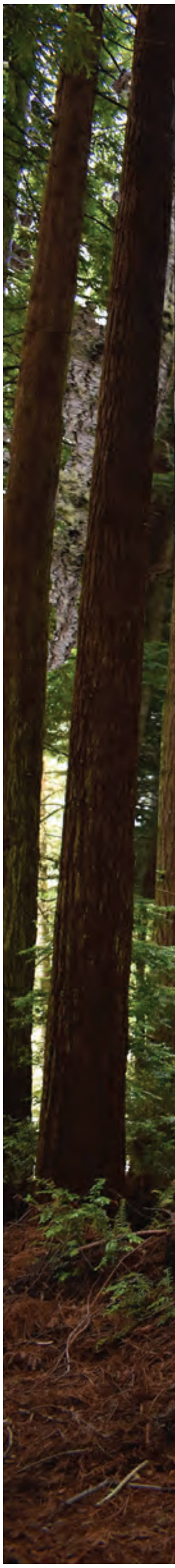

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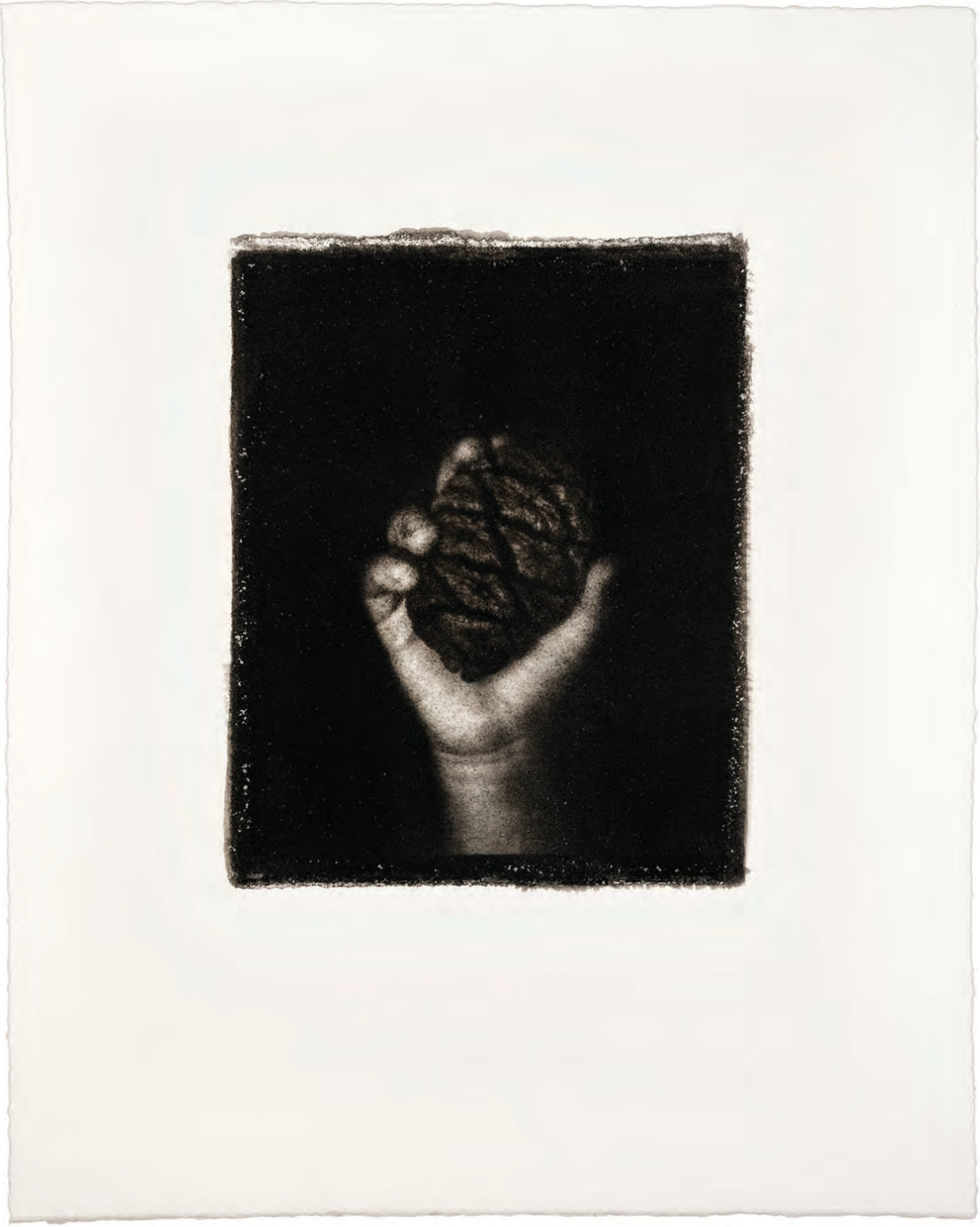
Margaret LeJeune

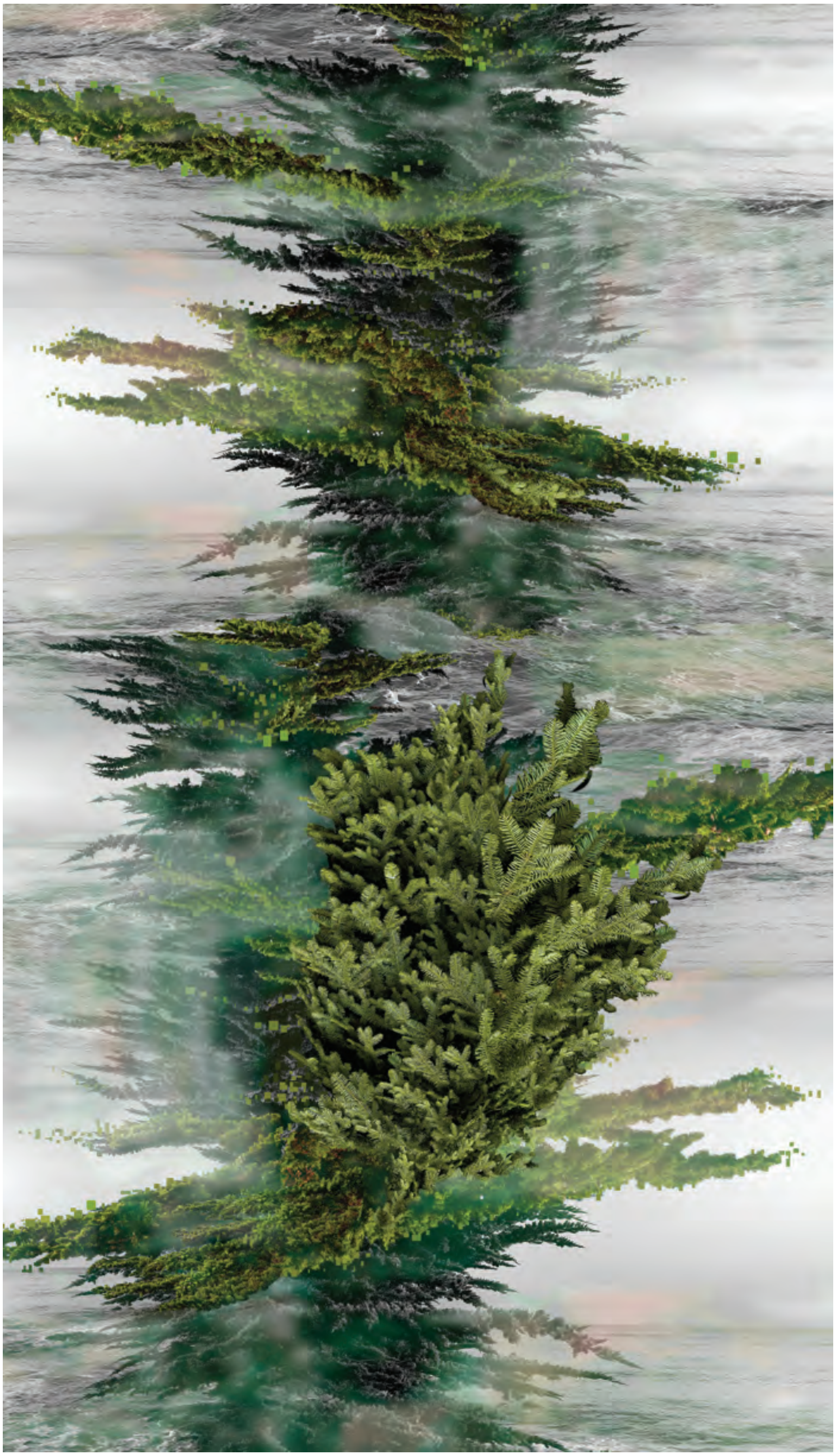


Chris Manfield

Aline Mare

Emmy Mikelson

Carol Paquet



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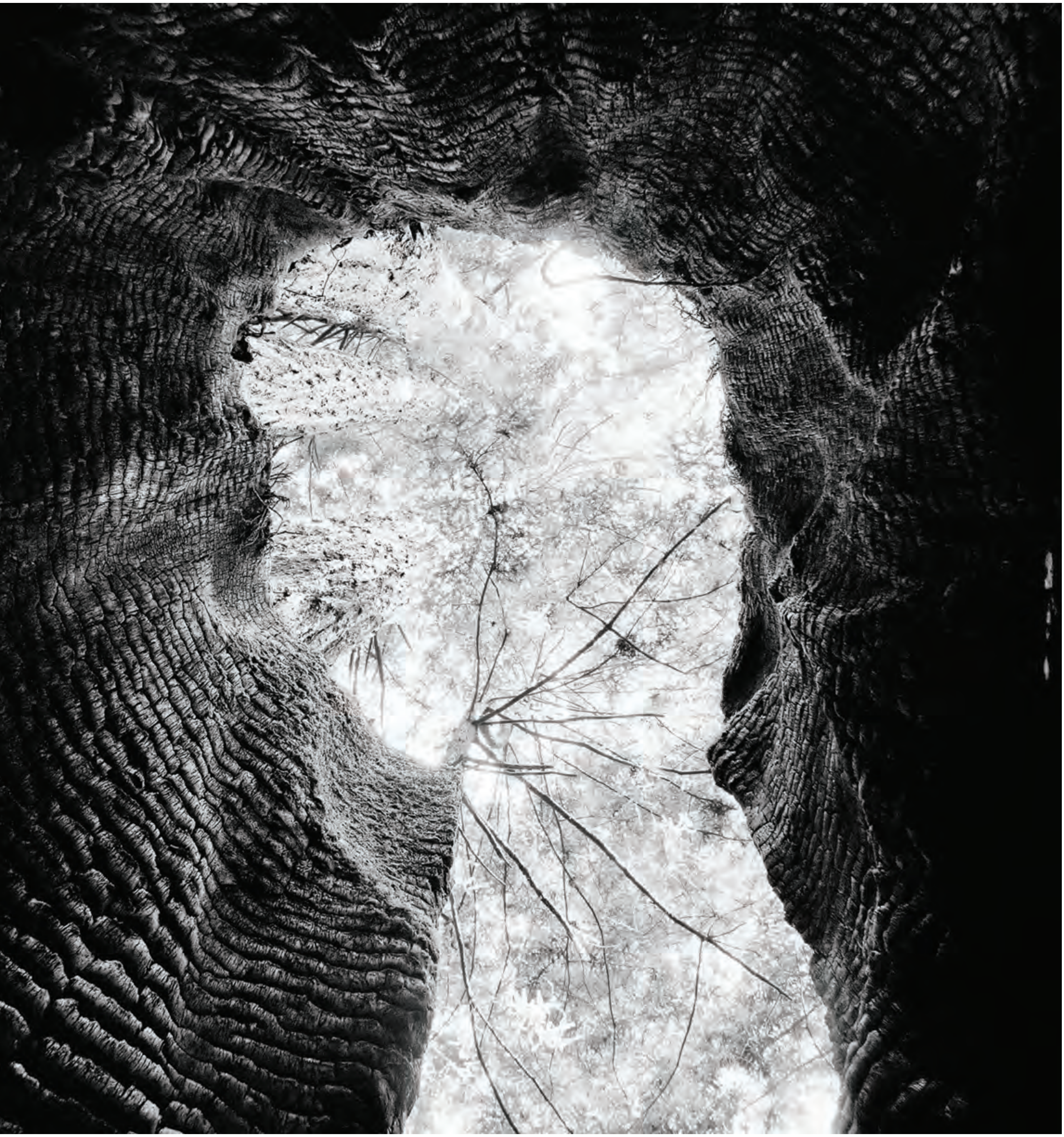
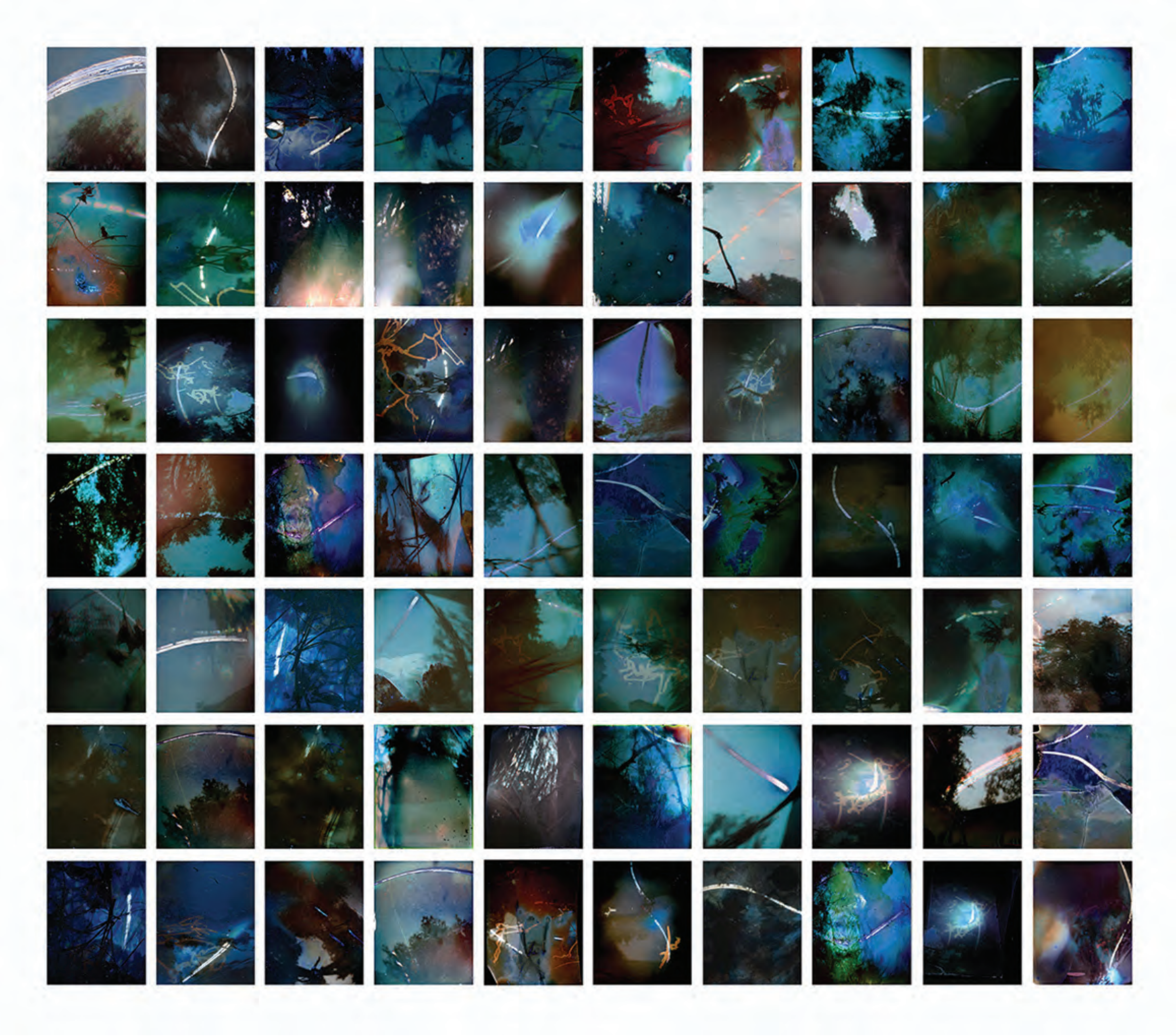
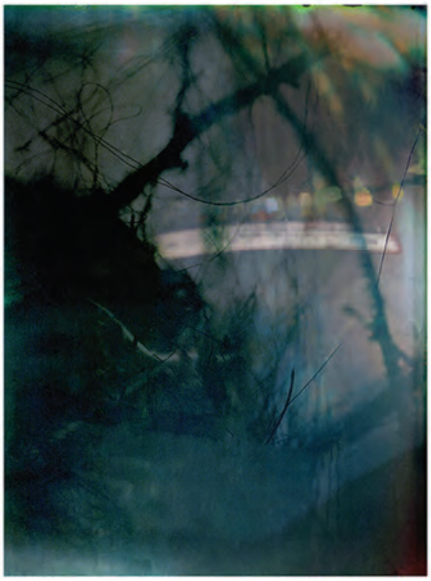
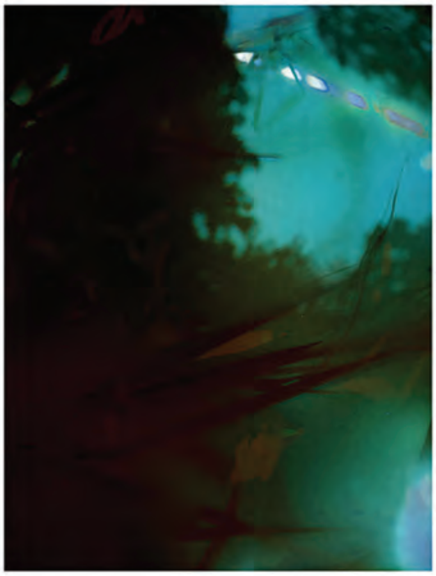


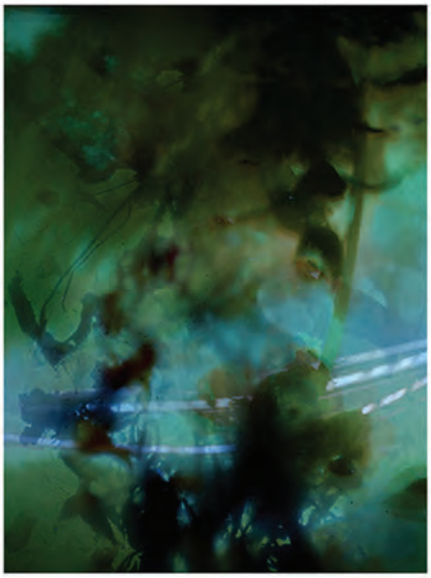
Linda Smith

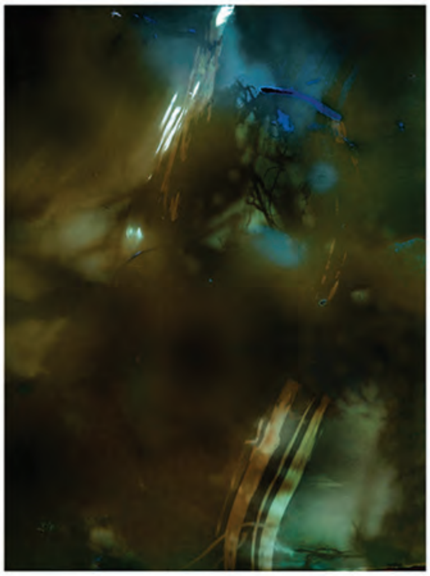


Krista Leigh Steinke

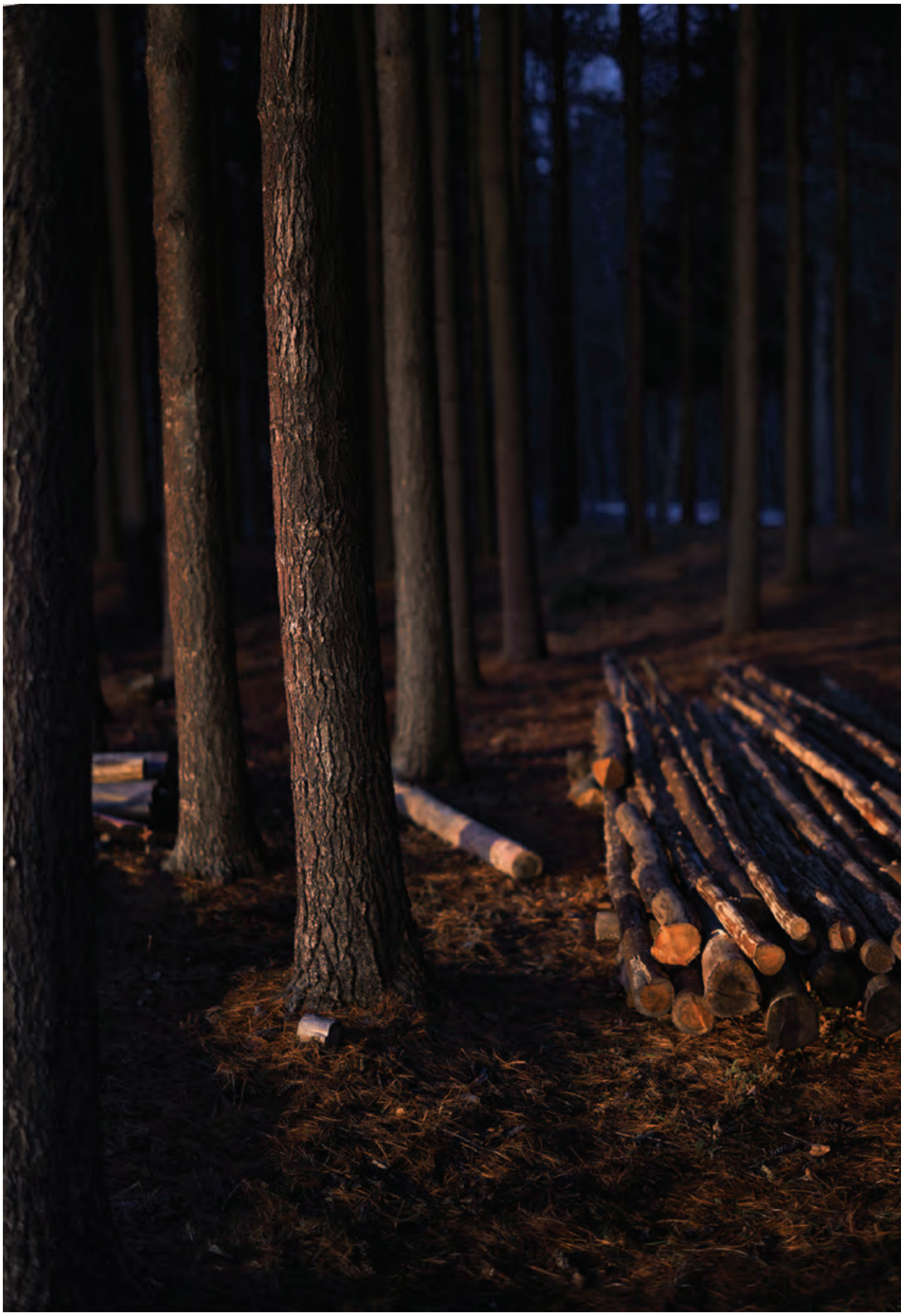




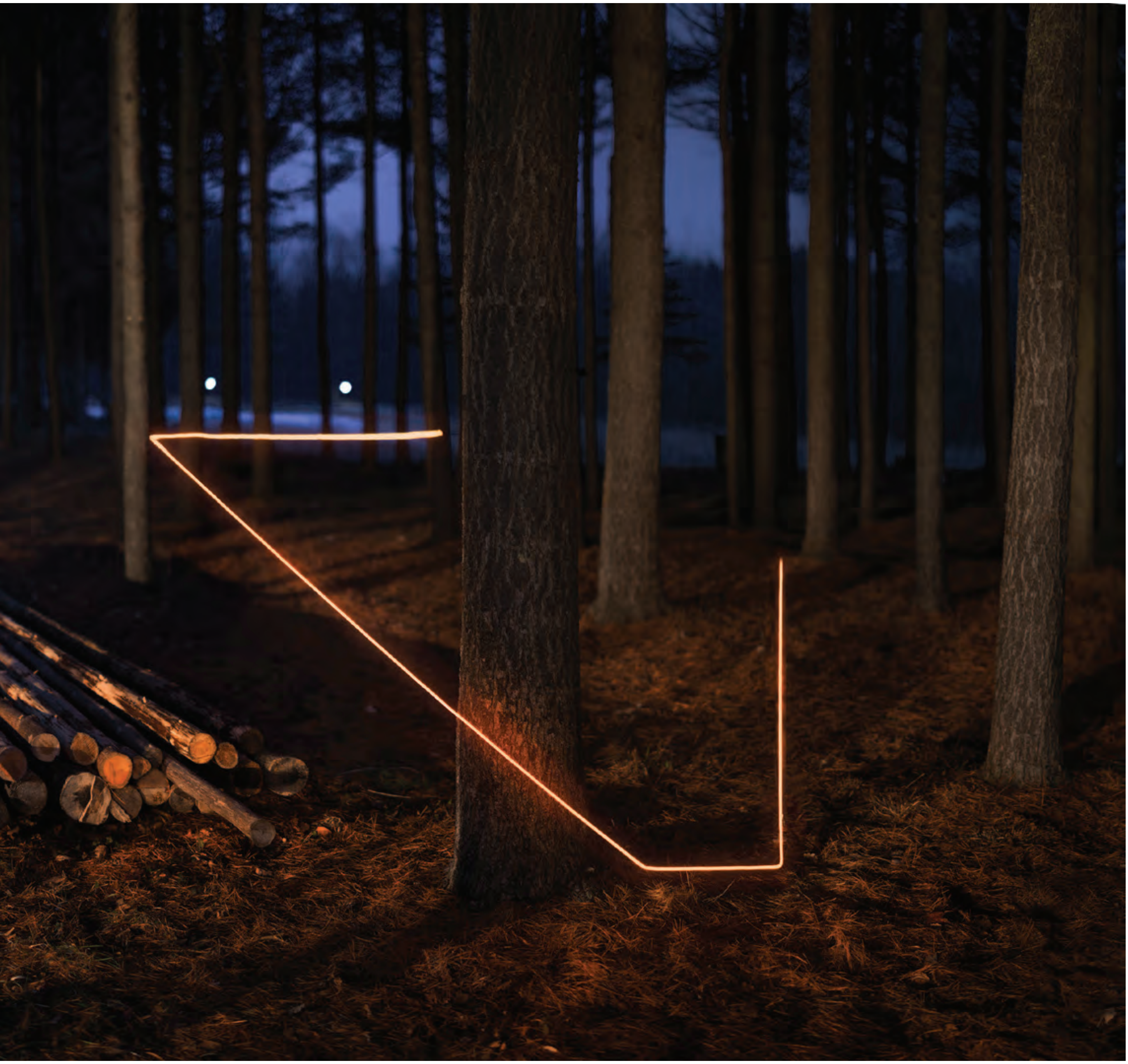




Claudia Tavares



Barry Underwood



Maria Whiteman

Textile

196 **Helena Elston**

Helena Elston
(London, UK)

***make, unmake, remake*, 2021**
hand sewn garment made with raw silk, raw hessian, mycelial dowels, and cotton thread

Nature is a regenerative cycle, where growth and decay are equal measures. Mycelium, the vegetative root of fungi, embodies ecology as an intelligent living system, a physical thread that sews life together. It is a process, not just one particular thing. It reestablishes the fundamental connection between body and nature. When I collaborate with mycelium, my experience of self changes, there's no "self" in nature, only a bridge of two worlds, body and Earth. Mycelium holds the body and reconnects our human belonging to nature. I perform the material and immerse myself in the Earth, and through a poetic symbiosis, the body and Earth exist as one. The mycelium sewn on this paneled piece is evolving the materials encased in a homemade "green house." Over time, the fungi will continue collaborating with the garment to make, unmake and remake the structure through a sustainable cycle.

helenaelston.com

raw hessian from Amoret coffe portobello
mycelium dowels
sew on hessian panels
handwoven silk from India

Helena Elston

Performance

—

200 **Christina Catanese**
202 **Basia Irland**
204 **Hings Lim**

Christina Catanese
(Michigan, United States)

***Field Notes on Remembering*, 2018–2019**
photo documentation, performance (18:49)

performed with Talia Mason

Field Notes is an evolving multidisciplinary dance work centered on the ginkgo tree, exploring memory, atonement, and ancestry on personal and planetary levels. At 200 million years old, ginkgo teaches us how to hold deep time ranges and changing systems in our minds. It has thrived in a complex stewardship story because of (not despite) its association with humans. The only living thing to survive the atomic bomb and a hardy urban street tree, ginkgo models resilience. Over three seasons beginning in fall 2018, we investigated through many ways of knowing and remembering, including paleobotany, natural history, neuroscience, traditional medicine, and personal stories. Indoor performances were presented during the winter months, with hundreds of gathered ginkgo leaves sharing the performance space. A culminating spring performance took place outdoors near and with a large male ginkgo tree at Bartram's Garden, which was planted in 1785 and is thought to be the oldest of its species in North America.

christinacatanese.com/ginkgo

Basia Irland
(New Mexico, United States)

***Cottonwood*, 2013**
seed text with native grass, seed footnotes,
hand-carved ice, 16 x 14 x 3 inches

The cottonwood (Populus deltoides wislizenii) bosque, (derived from the Spanish word for woodlands), lining both banks of the Río Grande in New Mexico, is an endangered forest ecosystem. As a way to take action, I create ephemeral hand-carved Ice Books embedded with an ecological text of native cottonwood seeds released into the river to help with restoration efforts. The cottonwood trees need floods to grow their seeds, and yet the Bosque has not had a flood since the 1940s, primarily due to climate disruption. The old trees are dying, and therefore I work with scientists and local communities to bring attention to the need to help restore the cottonwood trees along the banks of the Río Grande. Several hundred community members help to launch a series of the Ice Books into the water. Participants are then gifted with cottonwood seed packets so that planting can continue.

basiairland.com

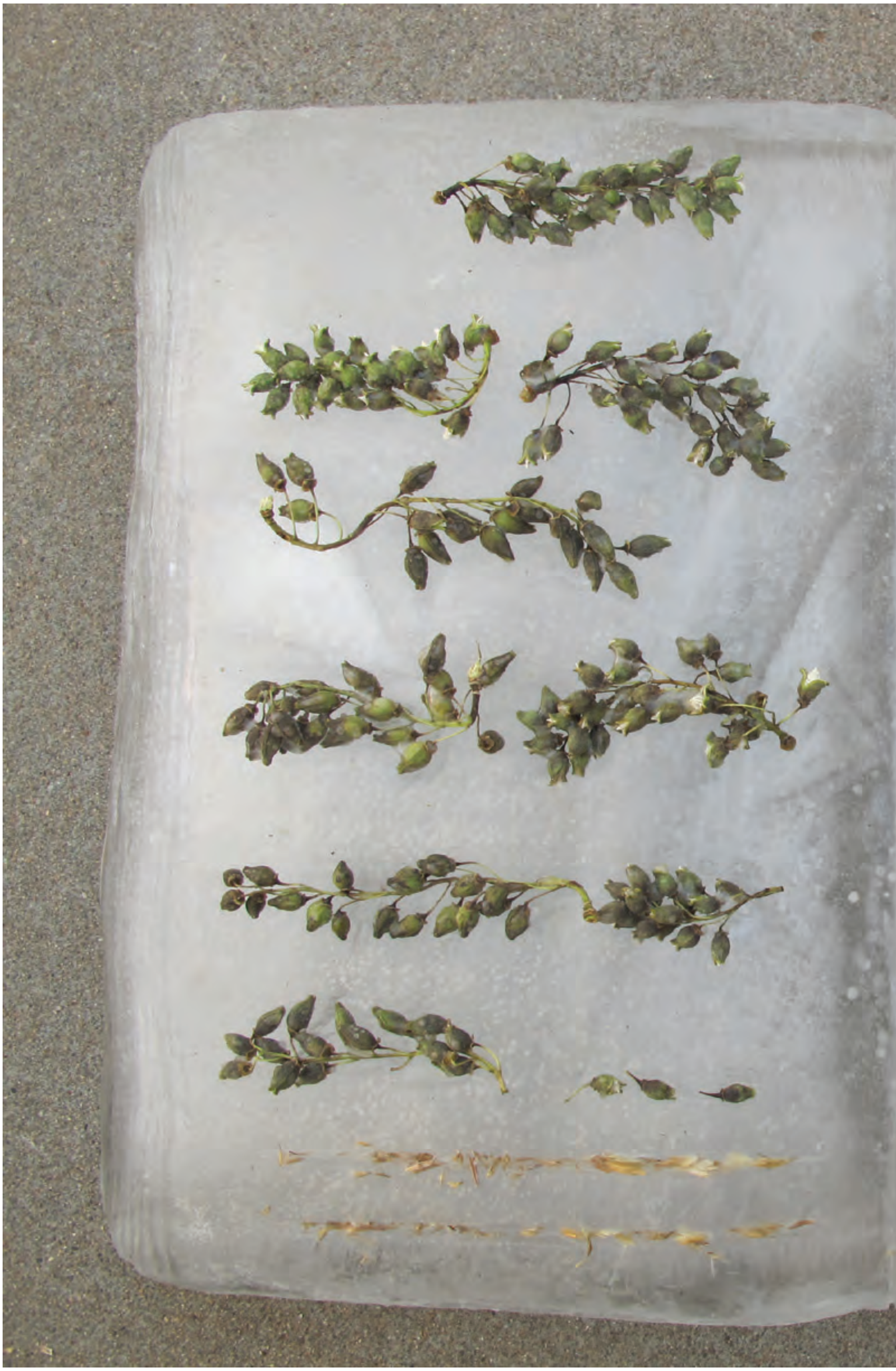
Hings Lim
(California, United States)

***Witness of Land (Historic Palm Tree at Exposition Park)*, 2021**
performance, video

This performance project invites participants to maneuver an augmented reality (AR) application to bring forth the presence of witness trees. Upon the arboreal survivor and landmark in a neighborhood, the absence of the past is summoned. Incantations are performed to conjure the memories of land while recalling the human history that still haunts. Trees are living time capsules of land. They are witnesses of history. They witness climate changes, migration, colonization, industrialization, and urbanization. They live long enough to witness the long history of displacement and discrimination, as well as the forgotten massacre and killing that took place under their shades. Outlive human lifespan they are evidence of the Anthropocene. They are the nonhuman others among the others.

hingslim.com

Christina Catanese



Basia Irland

Hings Lim

Installation

—

210 **Vaughn Bell**
212 **Kellie Bornhoft**
214 **Trine Bumiller**
216 **Yan Cheng**
218 **Alicia Escott**
220 **Gloria Florez**
222 **Christopher Lin**
224 **Chaney Trotter**
226 **Leah Wilson**
228 **Nanette Wylde**

Vaughn Bell
(Washington, United States)

***Local Homes: Woodland*, 2018**
plexiglas, hardware, woodland plants and organic materials specific to the local area, dimensions variable, created in collaboration with Patti Vitt, botanist at Chicago Botanic Garden. Photo courtesy Chicago Botanic Garden.

I have been creating works that facilitate a moment of encounter between humans and plants. Each one is designed for a specific location, featuring a living landscape. Featured in *Local Homes: Woodland* is a section of the woodland forest floor, one from a particular local forest type near the Chicago Botanic Garden. Working with botanists and horticulturalists, I explore the concepts of home, connection, care, and ecological entanglements. This work is part of an ongoing exploration in which I dig deeper into concepts anthropomorphizing or personifying nature through performances where I connect my own body physically with plants.

vaughnbell.net

Kellie Bornhoft
(California, United States)

***Burnishings*, 2018–2021**
installation includes 126 drawings on paper,
11 x 14 inches each

This is an ongoing series of drawings made of forest fire burned charcoal, paper and the texture of native species' bark. The process of collecting the drawings involves visiting public lands, identifying native species of trees and rubbing found charcoal taken from previously burned forests also on public land. The work is about reciprocity and touch in spaces otherwise driven by narratives of preservation and "leave no trace." The work seeks intimacy and tangibility with the hopes of fertilizing and caring for native species in these spaces. As the drawings are created, dust and bits of charcoal drop to the base of the tree as a type of offering.' The term "burnishings" describes the process of rubbing and care through a process of contact. The arrangement is based on a geographical mapping of the drawings from West to East.

kelliebornhoft.com

Trine Bumiller
(Colorado, United States)

***In Memoriam*, 2020**
installation including watercolors on mulberry paper,
78 x 30 x 15 feet

This installation was inspired by the story of the Golden Spruce, a famous Sitka Spruce off the Northwest coast of Canada, felled in protest of logging in 1997. This work recalls and honors the Golden Spruce and all trees that are being systematically destroyed. It speaks to our current times and memorializes the many lives lost in this time of pandemic and racial killing. Thirteen watercolor paintings of spruces on paper honor this history. They emphasize the verticality and height of these majestic trees and evoke their human qualities of power and fragility. Of the thirteen, one tree is golden, to directly reference the Golden Spruce, and highlight the preciousness of what we have lost, to venerate and make sacred the spirit of the tree, as well as the spirits of lost human souls. Contrasting the dark trees, it is a beacon of hope, highlighting the precariousness of life.

trinebumiller.com

Yan Cheng
(London, United Kingdom)

***Insect Poetics: Teleogryllus Commodus*, 2021**
performative installation, found objects, black crickets, dimensions variable

This installation explores how technology, nature and culture are entangled. It aims to disrupt centre/periphery binaries that separate humans and nonhumans by placing a nonhuman species at the centre instead of a mere backdrop. It represents nature as a concept that isn't separate from humans, revealing that we have forgotten our existence has its roots in the natural world and is vital for our mental, physical, and spiritual well-being. The crickets become performers as they're singing and chirping sounds are played through strategically placed microphones and effect pedals. Enclosed within terrariums and stacked pots that act as a reverberating echo chamber reside a species of black crickets (Teleogryllus Commodus). With black chalkboard paint on both the inside and outside, this materiality has connotations with traditional academic environments. It artificially recreates a nighttime environment as the crickets are nocturnal by nature. These pots allude to totemic structures, which draws on my fascination with trans-indigenous perspectives.

instagram.com/yangi.cheng

Alicia Escott
(California, United States)

***Everything Alive Here Is Dead: An Exercise in Listening 2*, 2020**
mixed media, dimensions variable

This work examines the entanglements of human-built structures in ecologies that evolved to burn. Live-Oak tree branches are embedded with intricate drawings of acorns on scraps of plastic construction vinyl. Entangled are bits of gold, copper wire, Apple earbuds, burnt chargers, burnt PVC piping (gathered from the aftermath of wildfires), and an iPhone video of the artist's hand interacting with a drawing on plastic of a grizzly bear paw. The work references gold rush era legacies of extraction, displacement, extinction, and subsequent gold-rushes (real-estate and technology). Regeneration is represented in the form of the embedded possibilities of acorns and the buried treasure of deep roots: bunchgrass that survives fire and sequesters carbon deep underground, networks of oak roots that entangle themselves below ground from one tree to another for mutual support, and references conversations about returning land to indigenous stewards who understand how to work mutualistically with fire.

aliciaescott.com

Gloria Florez
(Sydney, Australia)

***Forest Ambassadors II: Advocating for Ben Bullen & Newness Plateau to Become part of the Gardens of Stone National Park*, 2021**
muslin, clay, charcoal, eucalyptus leaves and bark.

As winner of the 2019 Northern Beaches Council and Eramboo Artists' Residency, Gloria Florez created Forest Ambassadors. This ongoing environmental-artistic community project explores endangered ecosystems, aiming to inspire future generations to protect our natural world. In 2021 as the winner of the 2020-BigCi Environmental Award, Florez joined explorer and environmentalist Yuri Bolotin on several bush-walks around the Gardens of Stone and the Wollemi National Parks. Both are part of the eight protected areas forming the UNESCO World Heritage–listed-Greater-Blue-Mountains. *Forest Ambassadors II* came to advocate for Ben Bullen & Newness Plateau to become part of the Gardens of Stone National Park, with rich bio/geodiversity areas that are still unprotected due to coal mining and logging. Florez later worked with fifty children from Bilpin primary public school and print-media artist Freedom Wilson transforming local biomaterials into a collage evoking this ancient habitat.

gloriaflorez.info

Christopher Lin
(New York, United States)

***Zuru Zuru Drifting*, 2020**
various mosses and lichen, springtails and disopods, soil activated carbon, glass bottles, water, sand, sea glass, aquarium, 11 x 16 x 9 inches.

My recent work explores the changing landscapes of the Anthropocene through constructed closed environments. In these works, I collected and preserved samples of mosses and lichen from the forests of the Hudson Valley, aiming to visualize these organisms, not as mere individuals but as delicately orchestrated symbiotic interactions. This compulsion to preserve in reaction to a looming threat recalls the parable of Noah and the Great Flood telling of a last-ditch effort, despite humanity, to conserve the natural world during an apocalypse brought about by environmental disaster. Floating and submerged vessels containing microenvironments balance a sense of beauty and fragility—carefully titrated organic interactions protected only by a thin layer of glass. Their forms suggest both the sentimentality of messages in bottles and safeguarded specimens like the Svalbard Seed Vault. These works aim to give a form and voice to the non-human organisms to create a clearer path for empathy.

christopherlinstudio.com

Chaney Trotter
(New York, United States)

***Second Before the Storm*, 2014**
installation (still from video), 96 x 96 x 144 inches

As a painter and installation artist, I am interested in natural and fabricated entities that allude to the personal mythologies of the observer. My work exists as an amalgamation of ecological and man-made items referencing a type of dualism between Human and Animal, object and totem, and actual versus phenomenological. The imagery in my work strives to look past the established perceptions and definitions of specific objects and the stories around them, all the while wondering if human beings, as rational creatures, still desire any creation of myth around the unknown. I use birch trees, moss, mulch, and other natural organisms to create modern shrines that venerate the forces of nature as present-day gods, unwavering in their ability to inform, inspire, and mystify the human experience.

chaneytrotter.com

Leah Wilson
(Oregon, United States)

***Listening to the Forest*, 2020**
Baltic birch plywood, acrylic and bio-based resin, 26 x 20 feet

This work spans the scale of an old-growth tree from the cellular level, to one growing in the forest. The composition and color of the installation is based on the distinctions of the cellular structure of wood and the variances of light quality from forest canopy to forest floor. The foundation of the project was climbing an old-growth tree each season to pay attention to the way it sways through time. Without time, there is no rhythm, no music of the land. We feel this rhythm within us when we feel we know a place: it becomes a part of us. *Listening to the Forest* creates a contemplative visual experience of light, color, shadow, and rhythm. Through the layered cut-outs, the experience of viewing the artwork changes based on the vantage point of the viewer and the quality of ambient light.

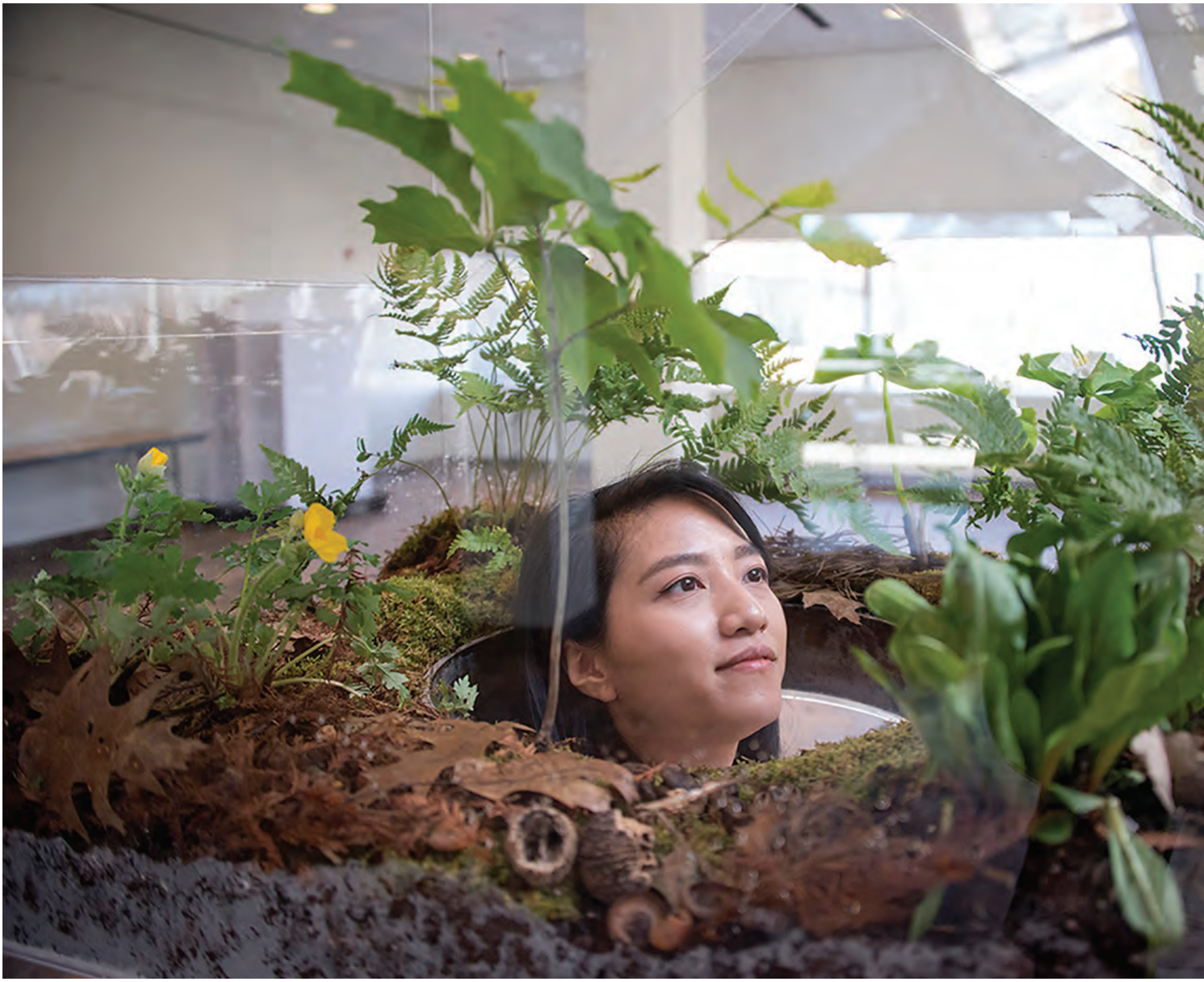
leahwilson.com

Nanette Wylde & Kent Manske
(California, United States)

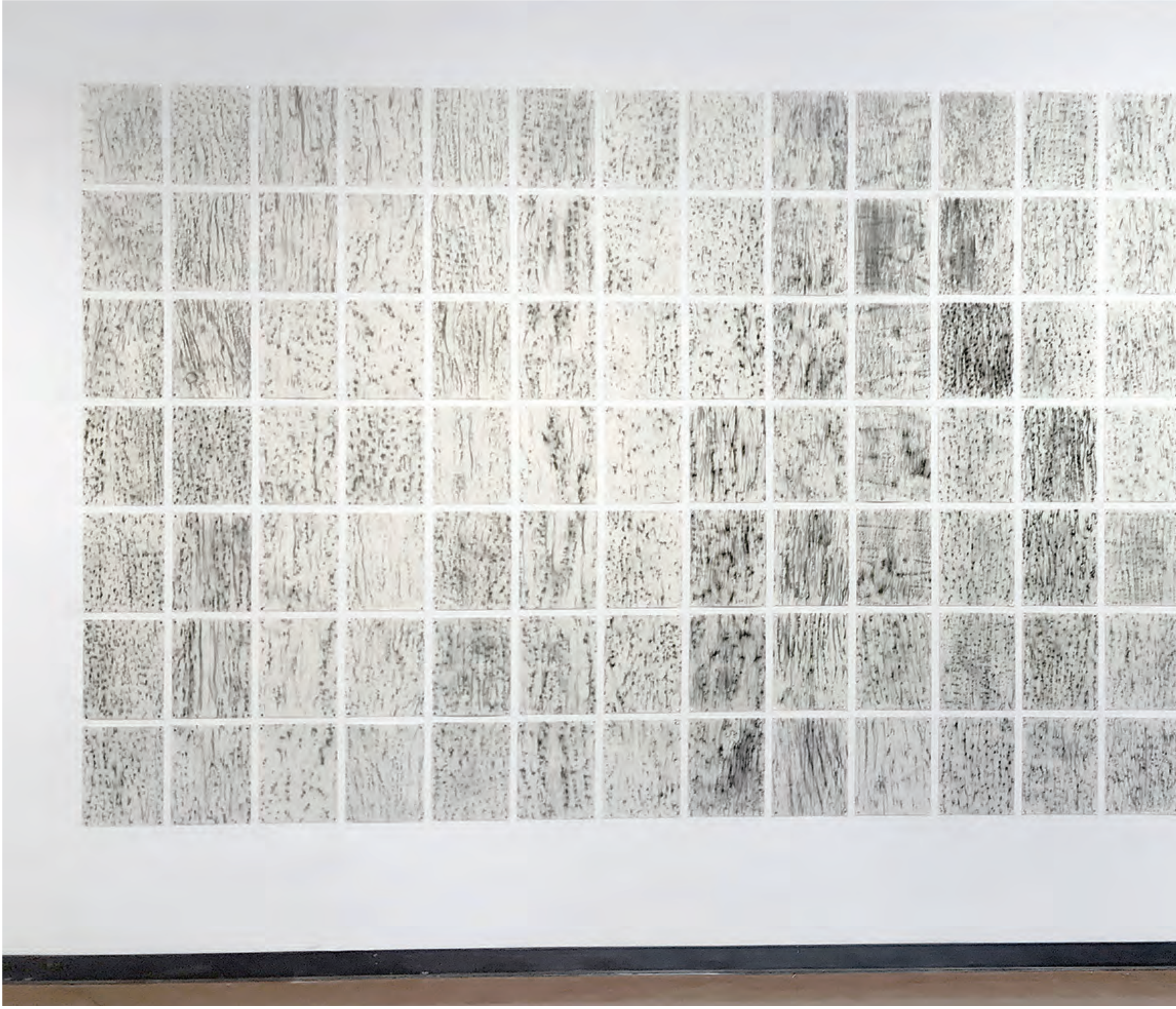
***You Are The Tree*, 2020**
handcrafted paper pulp made from spent beer grains, eggshells, grape skins, avocado skins, burlap coffee sacks, coffee grounds, newsprint, glass, metal shaving, fabric scraps, dryer lint, flower parts, pet fur and barber shop hair, acrylic paint, canvas, legacy tree markers, kozo paper, magnets and living coast redwood tree, 7 x 7 x 12 feet

This work is a seven-foot diameter replica of an old-growth, coast redwood tree stump. Coast redwoods are considered the most giant trees on earth, with heights nearing 400 feet, diameters upwards of 30 feet, and lifespans close to 2000 years. Coast redwoods only grow in the Coast Range, a 400-mile strip on the Western edge of California, and are currently classified as endangered. We made this handcrafted paper pulp sculpture from craft industry byproducts. Small flags mark significant disruptive innovation events that occurred during the last 400 years, the tree's lifespan. A thin slice of green rests on the stump's surface, representing the 5 percent of coast redwoods saved from the 19th-century clear-cutting of redwoods from the Coast Range. The tree celebrates local labor and honors people who make things with their hands while calling attention to sustainability issues, including byproduct reuse.

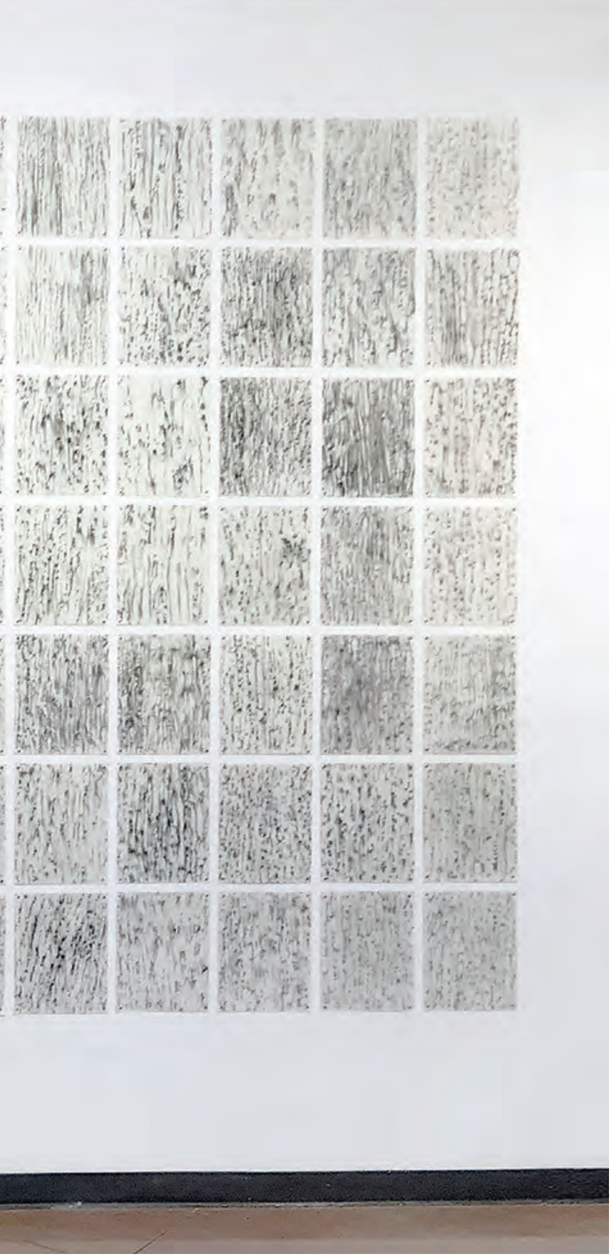
preneo.org/youarethetree



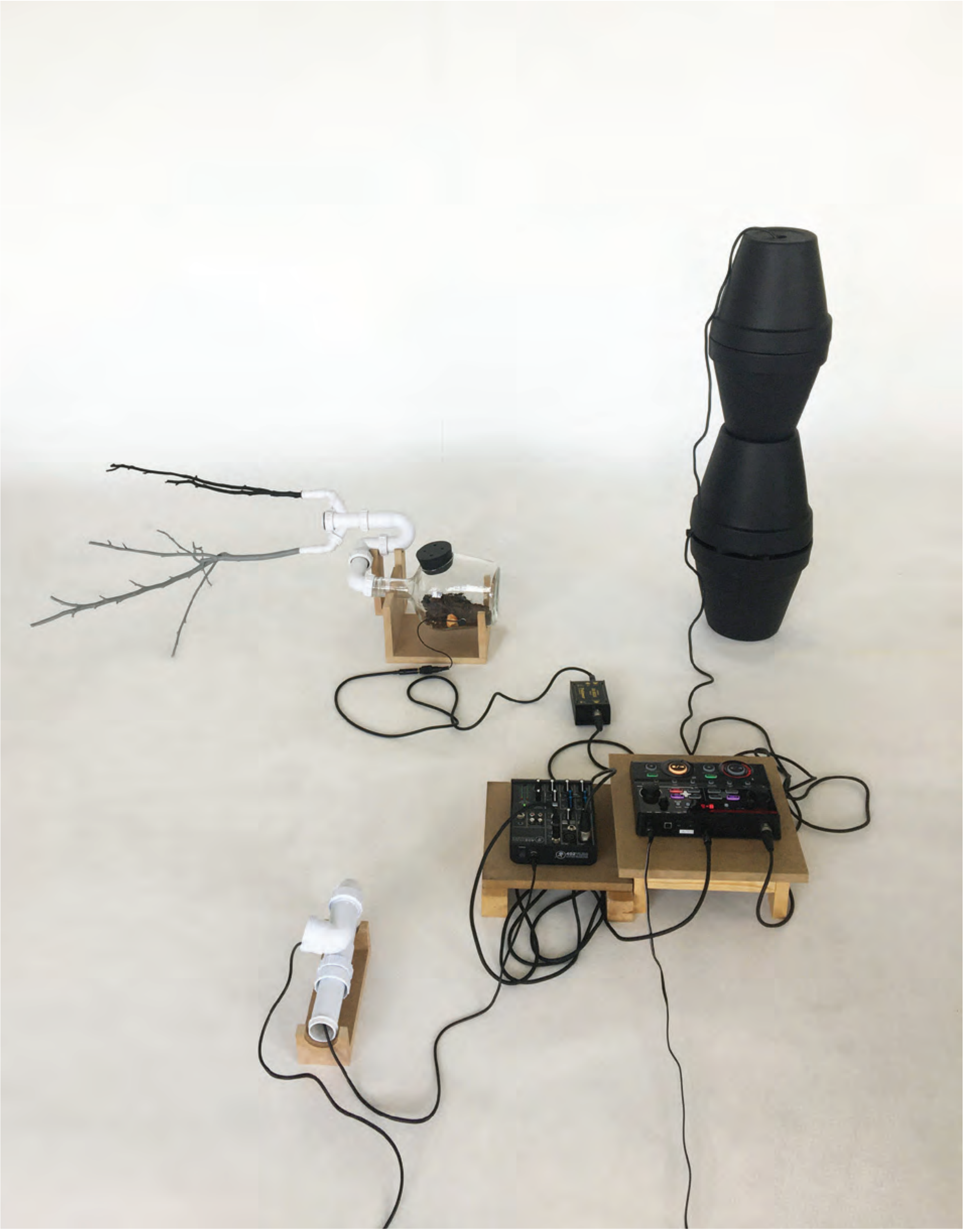
Vaughn Bell



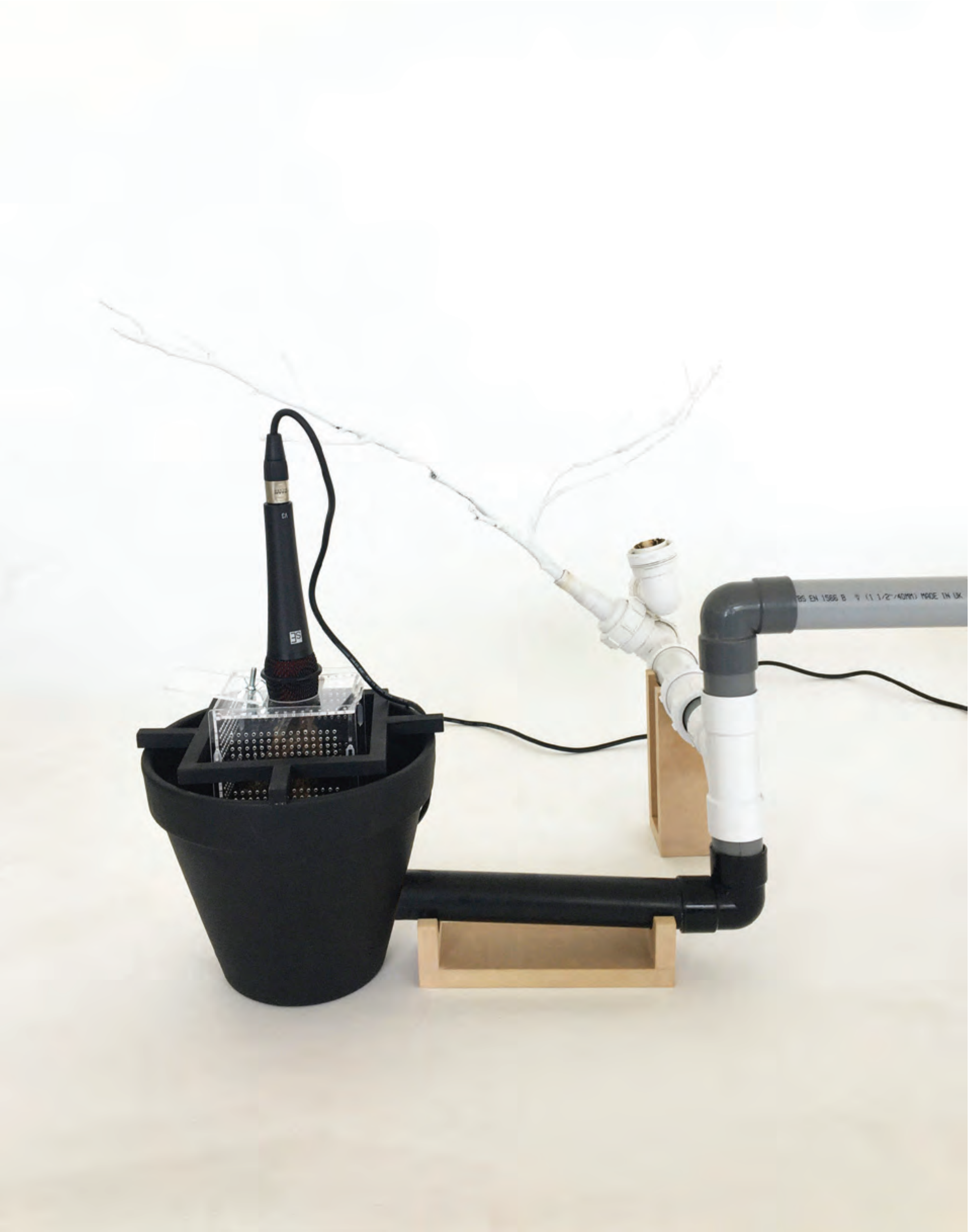
Kellie Bornhoft



Trine Bumiller



Yan Cheng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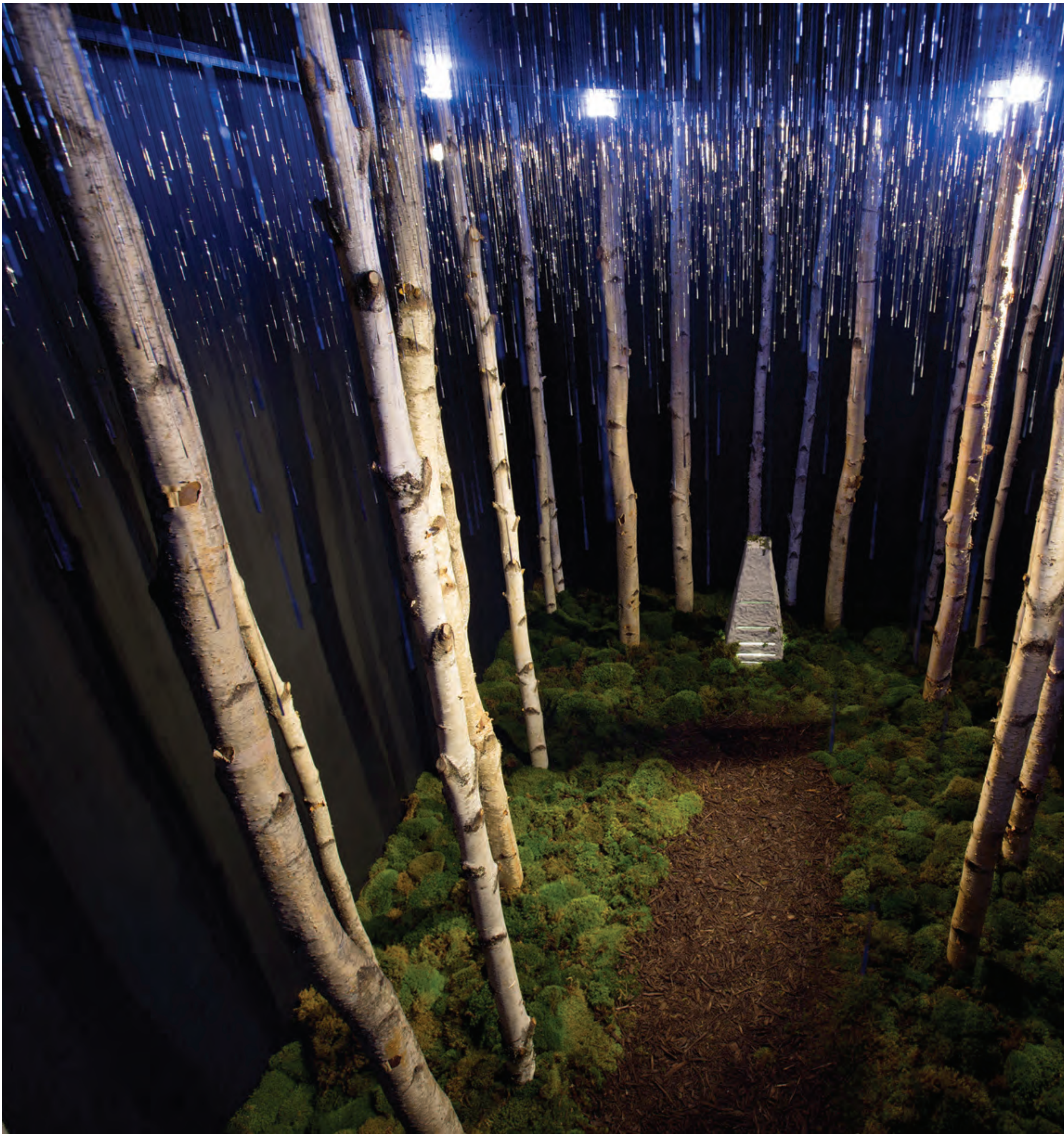
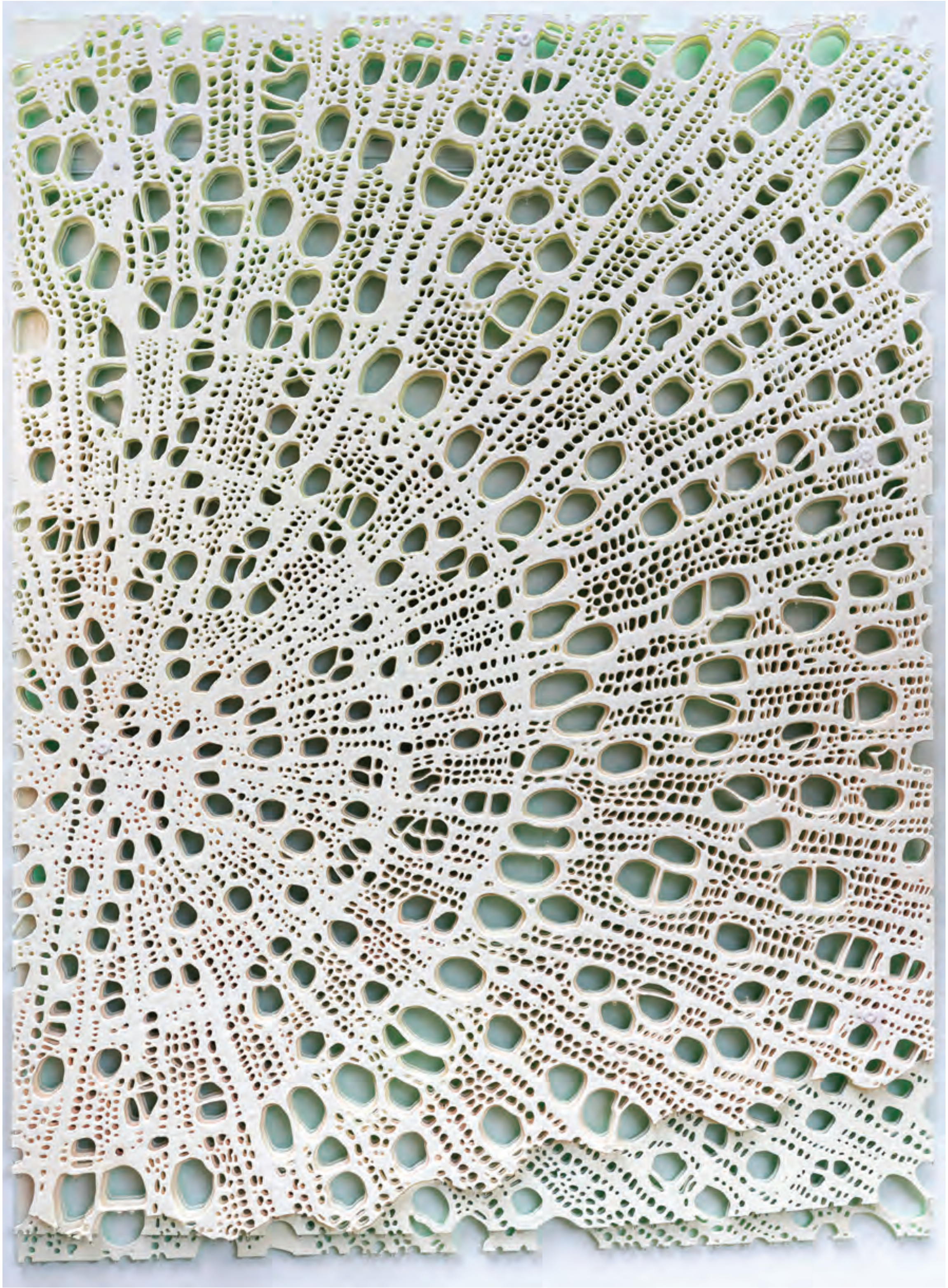
Alicia Escott

Gloria Florez

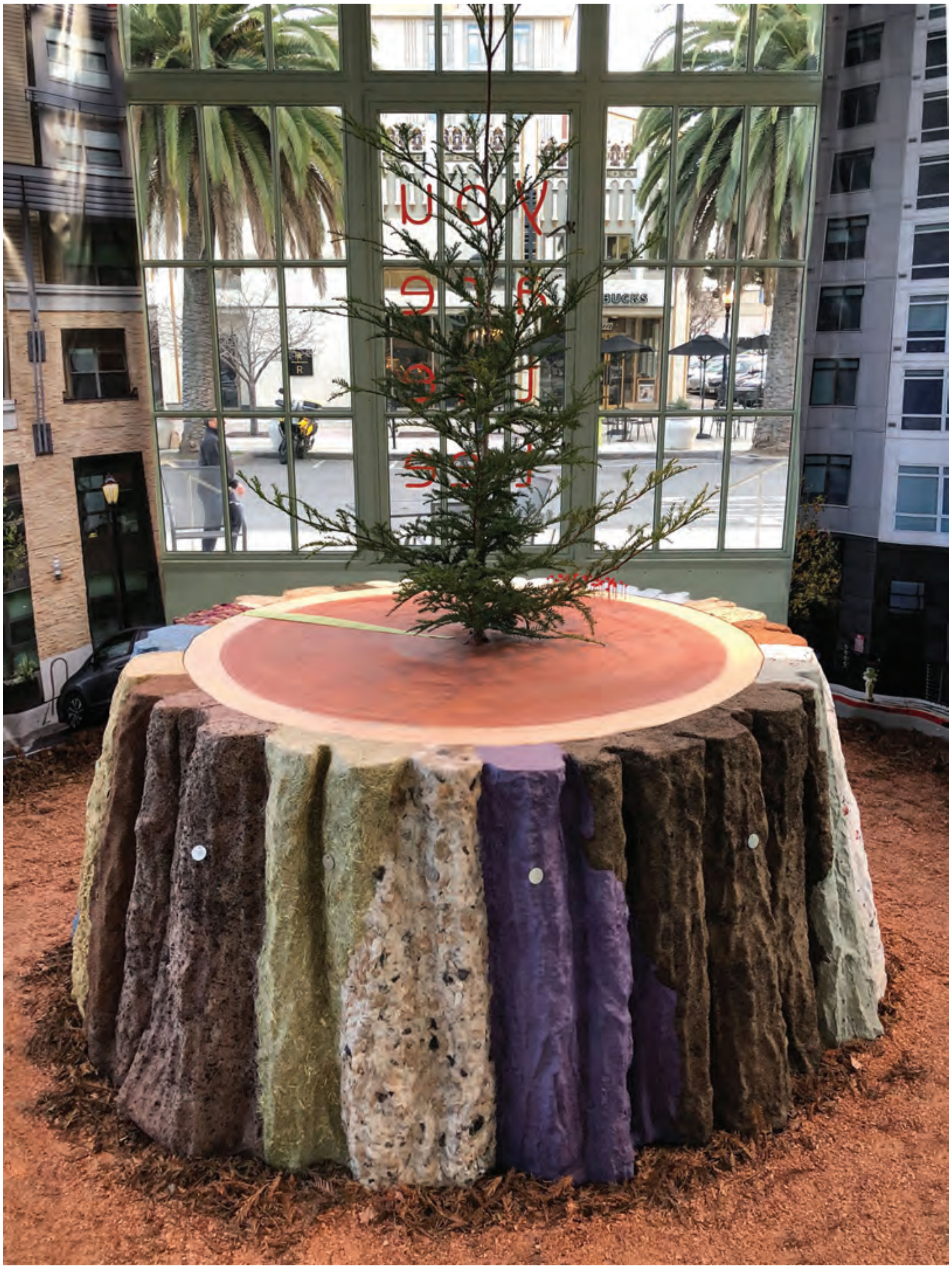
Christopher Lin



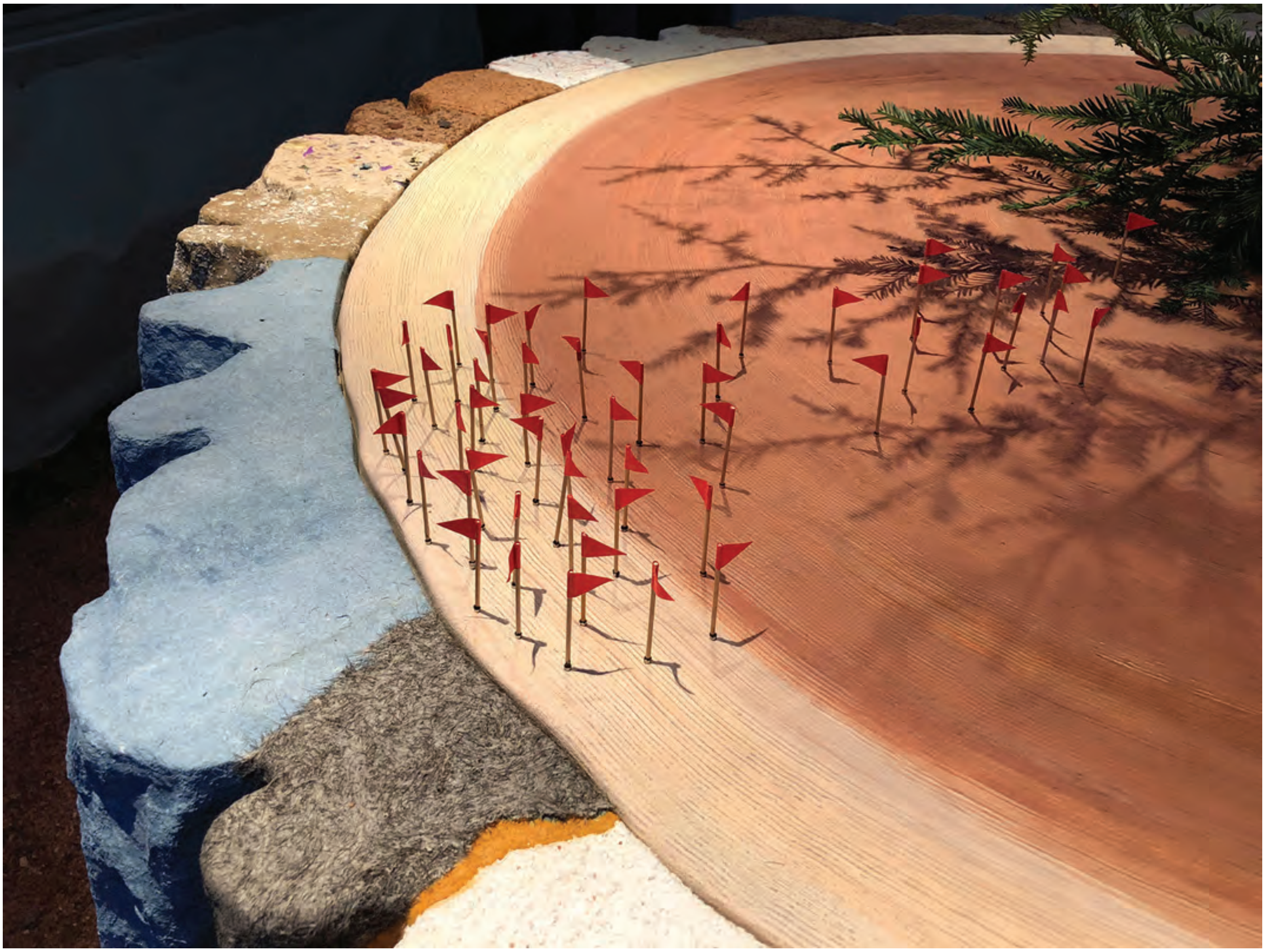
Chaney Trotter



Leah Wilson



Nanette Wylde & Kent Manske



Poetry

—

232 **Katy Gurin**

Katy Gurin
(California, United States)

***Archeopteris*, 2021**
***Late Devonian Extinction*, 2020**
***One Store Leaving*, 2020**

The evolution of forests during the Devonian Era may have had profound consequences on the earth's climate, possibly even precipitating a mass extinction. According to a leading theory, the first forests sequestered enough carbon to cool the planet and create an ice age. They also released an excess of nutrients, causing eutrophication that led to more carbon sequestration and the suffocation of many aquatic creatures. I became interested in the earth's first forests because I am a climate activist, and I wanted to know how coal, oil, and gas reserves were formed. Studying the deep history of earth has helped me understand the climate's fragility and imagine a future, climate-changed world. It has also given context and meaning to my existence: wonderfully, the story of life on earth connects me to all the creatures who made it possible for me to exist today.

katygurin.com

Archaeopteris

The pointed shadows of fungal obelisks
used to twirl with the day
over short, dewy filigree.
Then, making the earth's first gentle rustling,
tall green kaleidoscopes moved inland along the rivers.
Archeopteris, like a redwood born
from dust, cracked the rock so its roots
could wander the underworld
and steady its green overreach.

Archeopteris could recover
from a beheading
 to create a place shifting and close—
Archeopteris who softened the ground with shed seasons.
Who became the world tree. Who ended the world it made.

Late Devonian Extinction

[A]fter geological ages of rock-bound slumber, we're now releasing—all at once—the same carbon dioxide responsible for the difference between the tropical greenhouse of the Devonian and the wintry climes of the Late Paleozoic Ice Age that followed. We do so at our peril.

—Peter Brannen, Ends of the World

Loosing the earth's nutrients, did Devonian trees
overfeed the sea? Did algal bloat—
sucking the ocean's oxygen in its rot—
suffocate the many splendored fishes
and the feathered castles?

Sinking to seafloor, Devonian algae found
a sturdy, anoxic, abyssal tomb for carbon.

Once again, ice moved up into the air's
thinness. Joining, the glaciated continents
smoothed their animal facets:

for 100 million years of frost
no one hunted among the sealilies.

Katy Gurin

One Story Leaving

2020 Wildfire Season, Humboldt County CA

The sky is red with the fragrant ash
of inland forests. Sickness
has spread. I felt it in my muscles
as the old story left me:

before that day, I thought extinct life was defective;
I thought my ancestors—*Metaspriggina, Tiktaalik*—
were incomplete;
I couldn't imagine how easy it is to lose a world.

My cranium is like melting ice cream.
It's heavy, like an aged flower.
It's not me.

These days I think of my kin out there in time—
their flippers, their tendrils, their bony plates. All day
I think about how beautiful they are.

Enter, Disrupt, Change, Layer, Play, Model, Litigate; *The Blued Trees Symphony* as Legal Strategy to Protect Ecosystems

—

Aviva Rahmani

It is a common assumption that art is relatively helpless to effect real-world change. Sure, art can inspire, console and reveal new insight, but what about changing the world? I argue that assumption is precisely what keeps art and artists ineffectual in the face of ecocide. Art that crosses arbitrary boundaries between disciplines is uniquely qualified to identify where and how to be a cultural first responder, apply triage to disaster, and change policy.[1]

Art and ownership have different meanings in different cultures, which determines value. In the West, copyright law protects the reputation of artists and the commercial value of art products and ideas in a capitalist market, interpreted in Europe as the "spirit of the art."[2] Eminent domain law in the United States protects the federal dispossession of land, including forests, ostensibly to serve the public (economic) good, i.e., for roads.[3]

The Western model for ownership is mercantile, reifying tangible wealth and power. But not all cultures conceive of a possibility of owning art or habitat external to its cultural function for the entire community. Instead, in recent years, extractivist attitudes are increasingly challenged.[4]

In contrast to the West, Indigenous cultures rarely consider the possibility of "owning" cultural artifacts or vast natural systems such as water, air or habitat. However, some societies often appear to "own" women or other people as slaves and "own" and trade domesticated animals, such as cattle or horses. Territorial environmental access, for example, for hunting and fishing rights, might be considered another form of ownership, albeit from a different mindset than how Europeans think about property.

Since 1970, however, there has been a slow recognition of the pernicious effects of extractive industries and colonialist land appropriation, which culminated in recognition of "ecocide" as equivalent to genocide. The judicial history dates to the work of physiologist and bioethicist Arthur Galston in 1970. Galston cited the precedent of the American use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. Politics and policy-making are narrative processes. The late jurist Polly Higgins in the UK subsequently pursued the possibility of regulatory accountability for ecocide to The Hague.[5] The distinction between western and indigenous values about land ownership and habitat elements such as rivers has opened up an entirely new field of international legal theory argued in western courts. This movement challenges conservatism[6] and is referred to as Earth rights, environmental justice, and the rights of nature, creating a new narrative around ownership.[7]

In 2015, the artist Lillian Ball connected me with a small group of anti-fracking activists looking for an artist collaborator to stop the installation of Constitution natural gas pipelines in Northern New York State.[8] They hoped to build on the example of Demmitt, Alberta sculptor Peter von Tiesenhausen who had copyrighted the top 6" of his ranch to prevent eminent domain property takings for natural gas pipelines. The copyright discouraged the seizure of his land, though it was never tested in court. The activists showed me maps of proposed pipelines. I didn't just see miles of endangered complex biogeography; I saw the proposed pipeline corridors transformed into musical lines in a treble clef, extending for hundreds of miles across the continent. I could "hear" an enormous and fantastic installation of sonified art. That was the inception of *The Blued Trees Symphony* (2015–present).

The Blued Trees Symphony was a series of 1/3 mile measures across the North American continent with aerial notations corresponding to at least ten "tree-notes," marked with a vertical sine wave sigil whose painted diameter compared to the trunk width of each tree.[9]

Teams of painters made the marks at the invitation of property owners to protect their trees at each site with non-toxic casein of ultramarine blue and buttermilk. Markings were painted on hundreds of trees, and the artwork was registered and copywritten in 2015.

The inspiration for my theoretical approach was studying what worked in my *Ghost Nets* project (1990–2000). That project restored a coastal town dump to flourishing wetlands, created gardens, and established a home base on 2.5 acres. The site has become a research base for all my subsequent work, including developing trigger point theory, a complex adaptive model as a strategy for ecological restoration. The core premise of my theory was that art could identify small points for intervention in degraded systems, to change large landscape systems. In *Ghost Nets*, my interests were in the water, the East coast migratory seabird fly zone, and the fisheries. In *The Blued Trees Symphony*, I sought legal leverage to address climate change and protect forest contiguity, a matter of ecocide and Earth rights.[10] Although a musical score can be copyrighted, the legal hurdle was that there is no legal precedent for asserting that a score embedded in a forest has rights to physical protection. A garden does not, for example, because its ephemeral.[11]

I conceived of six rules to apply trigger point theory to the problem:

1. There will always be a small point of entry into any chaotic system. My point of entry was where copyright law must protect artwork from eminent domain takings if the work is permanent and integral with the habitat.

2. There will be critical disruptions in sensitive initial conditions. The sensitive conditions were climate change due to fossil fuel usage and deforestation at a tipping point for global warming.

3. The paradox of time and urgency is that there is time to change. The project and efforts to bring it into the courts and protect forests was urgent but changing public opinion, law and policy takes time.

4. Layering information will test perception. The confluence of legal and aesthetic theories enhanced the work's legal "standing" in the courts.

5. Metaphors are idea models. A forest's trees are permanent and the painted sigils are a musical experience analogous to Indigenous values about Earth rights.

6. Play will teach. All art is both playful and pedagogic.[12]

In 2018, A Blade of Grass fellowship program produced a mock trial at the Cardoza School of Law in New York City, and assembled by copyright lawyer Gale Elston, which produced an injunction from Bronx Supreme Court Justice April Newbauer, delivering the theory into the public domain to pursue formal litigation.

I am interested in pivoting from two arguments around the common good and environmental justice. One is a synesthetic conception of musical composition, including engaging other species—in this case, primarily trees—as acoustic collaborators in open-ended envelopes of time. The second is the realignment of copyright and eminent domain law, originally intended to protect the "sacred home.".[13] That originalism is at the project's strategic heart, challenging conservative legal assertions..[14] In this case, our sacred home is the entire planet, made livable by intact forests..[15]

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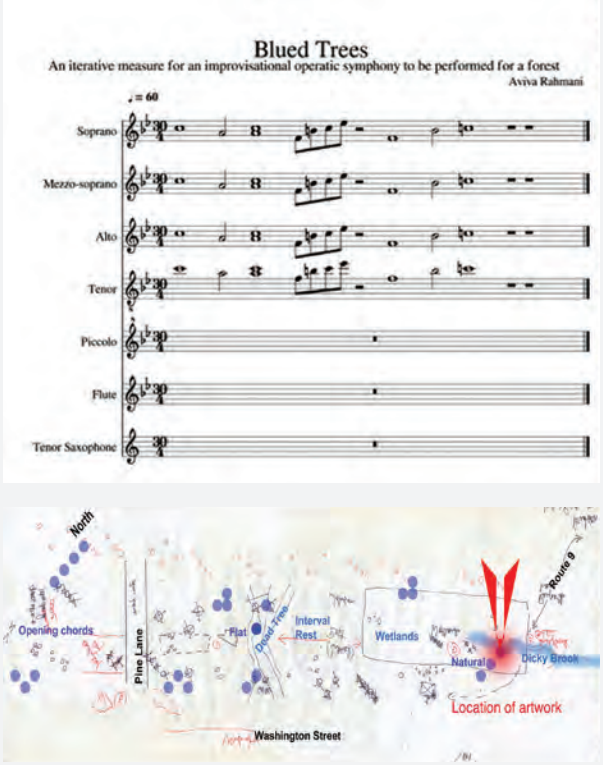

Aviva Rahmani, *Score*, 2015; copyrighted score

How to Photograph a Forest through the Trees (or Representing the Wild): Notes on a Work-in-Progress

—

Susannah Sayler & Edward Morris

Throughout our career, we have returned to seemingly simple how-to questions of representation. We began in 2007 with the question: how does one photograph climate change? Subsequently, we asked: how does one photograph (or film) a river in California; a science experiment masquerading as a nature preserve; an extinct species such as the passenger pigeon?, etc. More recently, we have been asking ourselves how does one photograph (or film) "The Amazon."

Behind these how-to questions of representation are even more fundamental, and even more deceptive, what-is-it questions. What is climate change? What is a river in California? What is "The Amazon"? The act of representation always begins with the signified, the thing attempted to be conveyed, or more accurately, translated. It's never easy to say what something is precisely, even an object as simple as a hammer or a fork; it all depends on the relationship between the perceiver and the object. There is always something withdrawn in the object's ungraspable completeness. This observation, which has been developed and refined by object-oriented ontology, is particularly profound when the "object" of representation is not precisely locatable in time or space, such as a hyper-object like climate change; a disappeared object like the passenger pigeon; a flowing, ever-changing object like a body of water; or an object with disparate and often clichéd cultural associations that supersede its physical reality, such as "The Amazon."

For this reason, the process of representation begins even one step before the most basic-seeming what-is-it question. We must first ask to-and-for-whom something is. What is the Amazon to the scientist? What is it to the tourist? To a given indigenous person? To a tapir? To a government? To an oil company? What is it to us, the ones seeking to represent it? And perhaps most importantly, what is the forest to itself? Anyone who has stepped inside knows the forest indeed is a being onto itself, withdrawn and real. It sees and thinks. It has an intention that cannot be fully understood.

Relatedly, there is also here a concealed "when" question. When—i.e., at what point in what continuum—is climate change, a river in California, the Amazon? We have written before about our sense of ourselves as historian-artists and our work as form historiography in which what matters, in the words of Walid Raad, is not so much the facts themselves "in their crude facticity" but rather "the complicated mediations through which [facts] acquire their immediacy." (See our essay "Claims to Immediacy" in the journal *Memory Connection*). What's come to a head in our work on

Sayler/Morris, *Untitled*, 2021; collage works from *How Forests Think* series (work in progress)

the Amazon is our sense of our role not simply as historians but rather as as *mytho*-historians. Meaning writers (imagers) of both myth and history, or rather a form of history that is also a myth, or myth that is also history; a richer and emotionally nuanced form of writing (and thus again more accurate). What myth means here begins with a sense of time not strictly governed by dates, unmoored from colonial referents; a sense of the past that is not tethered to a specific narrative continuum. What stories and organization of experience can come out of free-floating time when refracted through a specific point in space—a place, a territory, a land?

The Amazon means many different things to many different people. It is both an inhabited space, very real, and also a symbol. Perhaps, the way to represent it, then, and to make a case for its immediate and urgent relevance, is to attempt to collage or mosaic these different meanings and representations, including our own.

We begin with trees, as our project is an attempt to see a forest through the trees. The tree is the fact. And every fact has inexhaustible implications. (This is the withdrawnness of which the object-oriented ontologists speak). The forest (both real and symbolic) is the mediation of those facts.

The tree is to the forest as an arm is to an octopus. It is a sensory organ, but also, in the bizarre way of an octopus, also a brain. The forest has a decentralized nervous system. There are many eyes and overlapping intentions. When you enter the forest, you are reacted to and watched. Before long, you are part of the forest. That happens in real-time.

Moreover, there are other humans amidst the forest. In the Indigenous cosmology, as many have pointed out (for example, Eduardo Kohn in *How Forests Think*), humans are not just the species we in the West recognize as such, walking erect with our sense of exceptional intelligence, alone in the condition of *Dasein*. In the Indigenous mind—the non-colonized mind—jaguars, tapirs, macaws, snakes, ants, and trees themselves are humans. The forest is human. Without a doubt, some spirits are not human. The dead are there in the forest too.

Even in a more down-to-earth sense, there are many variations of humans of the kind our Western minds recognize in the forest: oil company workers; Waorani in one territory; Cofan in another; scientists are studying this and that, collecting data assembled as climate change and pharmaceutical drugs; there are eco-tourists in luxury huts; the many people are looking and reading about the forest in magazines and on the Internet—eyes brought to the forest via virtual space.

The one-eyed Francisco de Orellena, lieutenant of Pizarro and self-proclaimed conqueror of the Amazon, once passed through the exact locations we photographed. Orellena was the inspiration for Werner Herzog's *Aquirre Wrath of God*. Herzog famously called the Amazon obscene, seeing misery everywhere, conflict and fornication. Herzog embodied Orellena. What was conflict was simply resistance to being conquered.

The trees do not move but watch in the soil.

One day, we went out in the forest accompanied by a Waorani woman. She sang the entire time, at home. She said the name for different plants and demonstrated their uses. We became unclear about the time of the day. She wandered off while we photographed and returned with a palm frond, explaining that it was a roof.

Another day, we walked in the forest with the Cofan, who used iPhones and an app to record the trees, plants, and animals on their land. The Ecuadorian constitution gives indigenous people sovereignty over their lands and grants rivers, trees, and mountain rights. These rights are regularly encroached. The Cofan and others have successfully (so far) fought back. They use this app, drones, and motion sensor cameras to monitor oil and mining intrusions in the forest—more eyes in the forest—electronic eyes.

In the middle of the forest, there is an actual ruin in reverse, not ironic as in Smithson. A temple built in the form of an office park, the structure was sacrificed to the forest to celebrate its appetite. The trees break through the concrete floors and grow in the faux Corinthian columns. Rain pours through holes in the roof, spilling onto broken computers. Jaguars made from ceramic tiles guard the entrance. Vines embrace the façade.

The wild is in the cities of the jungle too. Half-finished buildings, with rebar sticking out of the roofs in clusters that themselves resemble forests. White mannequins in storefronts selling whiteness. Streets and hotels are named Auca (a pejorative term meaning savage). A statue of Orellena is unfinished or has been smashed, another ruin in reverse; his hand is only wire. His mouth is chipped. Someone has stuck a party horn in his nose and written "pirata" over his name.

Today, as we write this, in the news: "Tropical Storm Grace forms as Fred approaches Florida;" "Antarctica is melting. Its future could be catastrophic;" "Evacuation order for 5 million people as rain batters Japan coast." The forest is this weather. The forest has known this was coming; each tree senses it.

The Amazon is the wild; it is the symbol of the wild.

The method of our project is collage—layering levels of signification, combining forms of representation, and trying to translate "the wild," in which the preservation of the world is said to lie.

Sayler/Morris, *Untitled*, 2021; collage works from *How Forests Think* series (work in progress)

Signs of Life, Enchanted Forest, and Valises for Camp Ground

—

Kim Abeles

Before arriving in Southern California, I lived in the lush woods and meadows of southeastern Ohio with a dedicated spirit of country living. Shift forward and nearly four decades living and working in downtown Los Angeles, I was forever searching for nature, in the mountains to the distance and obscured by smog, in the small patches of plant life in sidewalks that no poetic person overlooks. Loving LA as I do, the surroundings did prompt me to make trees, count them, and document them. I made leaves five times their standard size with their names and location origins embroidered on each. I photographed research trees from every direction to recreate them as fabric lengths that breathe with the viewer walking by. I make shaped leaves portraying ancient living trees and surface them with their neighboring skies. I place large-scale seeds of trees with elaborate narrative interiors along a trail to urge visitors to hike further. Trees inform and quietly accept the homage as we pass along.

In 2004, I started the series *Signs of Life* using satellite photographs to pinpoint trees on urban streets. The first artwork, *Looking for Paradise (One Tree for Each Tree Downtown)*, uses hand-painted, laser-cut paper trees to mark each tree in a section of downtown Los Angeles. The 700+ trees mounted on the aerial-surfaced table hover above the viewer's head like a forest canopy. "More than I would have imagined," remark most viewers. But look carefully at the city blocks with no signs of life, peculiar with their concrete landscaping.

Signs of Life (diptych) unveils life forms in downtown Los Angeles. Again, using a detailed aerial photograph as the foundation, one artwork identifies trees using model trees. The other uses illuminated, square keyholes to locate impermanent structures used as homes for people who have found it necessary to live on the streets because of soaring rental prices, economic disparities, and failing education and health systems. I went on foot to note these locations; it seemed vital that I walked rather than creating separation by driving. This diptych includes a laptop that has been cracked open and flattened to reference a backpack. A video shows photographs of the structures that are sighted on the aerial with light. The mapping created in 2005 would be so much more intense today as the houseless population has increased considerably.

The further I went into *Signs of Life*, the more I felt the contradictions needed to be called out. Works like *Terracotta Palms and Concrete Blanket* transform the trees into monochromatic forms that melt into their surroundings or camouflage to protect themselves.

Portrait of Paradise (One Tree for Each Tree Downtown) and *One shelf for each tree downtown* mount each tree as a carefully placed specimen -- either separated from their natural state for the sake of ownership or as a symbol of protected space.

In 2007, the idea expanded into *Enchanted Forests*, representing trees surrounding a mall or baseball stadiums where clusters of plant life encircle the concrete blankets. *Infrared Coast* and *Enchanted Forest* focus on the Newport Coast region of Southern California, where palm trees are a standard luxury that scores an engraved impression on the minds of residents and visitors. Likewise, *Enchanted Forest (and golf course)* presents an artificial, groomed, perfected nature and a place where green is not ecological in the slightest. *Enchanted Forest (and City Hall)* reveals that a prominent cluster of trees surrounds government buildings in a similar vein of thought. Palm trees are placed as if they are tall sentries protecting the officials inside. These are in contrast with the scale of the governmental center. To create this artwork, I photographed all sides of the City Hall and assembled the digital prints into a tiny replica that I could hold in the palm of my hand.

Art that provides a viewer with riveting portrayals of nature or society serves to re-engage a person with the physical world; this is where positive change can occur. If one does not love the world, that person will not imagine a need to protect it. Artworks like *Signs of Life* are intended to call attention to how we identify nature (plant life and the people around us) in the built environment. The body of work, *Valises for Camp Ground: Arts, Corrections and Fire Management in the Santa Monica Mountains*, invokes a similar philosophical desire to awaken but its creative process and didactic purpose embraces community involvement.

For six months, I worked with trained women firefighters creating ten valises to be used by National Park Service rangers, County Fire educators, and teachers to educate communities about firefighting and abatement. The project was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts' Imagine Your Parks, a program "to fund a spectrum of arts projects in national parks" and to partner with the National Park Service. *Valises for Camp Ground* are mobile artworks and creative programming that teach about environmental issues related to urban development adjacent to forests. The project achieves two core principles directed by the grant: "increasing public awareness and responsible stewardship through wildfire management programs and providing skills development for incarcerated women through creative activities."

Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture's Civic Arts and The Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena administered my residency at Camp 13, a conservation facility for minimum-custody female convicted felons. Additional stakeholders included the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LAC), and the National Park Service.

For the project, I designed a strategy to make educational sculptures based on the success of *Run-off Dolphin Suitcase*, a project I created in 1995 funded by the Santa Monica Bay Restoration. I welded a functioning suitcase in the shape of a dolphin and surfaced it inside and out with storm drain run-off collected at the beach. That piece is now in the collection of the Lux Art Institute in San Diego. Educators use it to teach youth and community about the storm drain system, littering, and consumption.

The dolphin suitcase proved to me that art about civic issues is a highly effective strategy: bringing art to the community rather than waiting for the people to find it independently. The sculptural valises combine social engagement with performance to generate active participation with groups of all ages. As with the *Valises for Camp Ground*, each presentation is tailored to the audience, venue, and purposeful goals.

The ten *Valises for Camp Ground* have been actively employed since their completion in 2018. Each valise has a theme with specific talking points, and all of them circle back toward teaching issues about built environments adjacent to the wilderness, causes of wildfires, and preventative measures. The female inmates at Conservation Camp 13 used their firefighting knowledge to supply content for the valises. The process to develop the valises was organic because we created a two-way conversation between me as the resident artist and the inmates as experienced firefighters. Along with guiding the talking points, the women also responded to the artistic outcomes. Participants worked alongside me with

right: Kim Abeles and the female firefighters of Camp 13, *Valises for Camp Ground: Arts, Corrections and Fire Management* in the Santa Monica Mountains, 2016–18; ten mixed media, interactive sculptures used to teach about wildfire prevention, abatement, and our relationship to nature. Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and administered by The Armory Center for the Arts. Photo: Ken Marchionno

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their projects and created elements used in the valises. We kept the interaction fluid and taught each other.

In addition to wildfire prevention, some of the valises respond to discussions with park rangers regarding residential areas, such as the need to secure homes from wildlife entering and getting trapped, and conversely, encouraging wildlife through habitat development. Other topics include invasive plants vs. native species and citizens' responsible use of parks and national forests.

The valises activate in a performative way by being carried like luggage and opened to reveal their interior dioramas and details. Elements are removed for the viewers to touch and examine. Aesthetics and attention to craft weigh equally with the function of the art. These sculptural expressions are intended to captivate the viewer and draw them into the inquiry. As mobile artworks, the venues for *Valises for Camp Ground* vary and serve a wide variety of audiences. The locations have included public and community venues, outdoor "pop-ups," and educational settings, transforming the spaces into performative zones. The suitcases keep active with the help of docents to engage the audience. Programming includes poetry readings, panel discussions, and presentations by Rangers and Fire Department educators. The art was created with the community and interacts with the community.

Today, when I returned to my home in the San Bernardino Mountains, I was detoured because a wildfire had broken out. In times like that, misgivings fill my mind: art's role in the climate crisis feels small or ineffectual in those moments. And then I remember the list of fires and their causes that are hand-lettered on *Valise 4—Prevention*. Some of the recent fires in California were caused by lightning, but it is a rare occurrence. Numerous sources reveal that humans cause 90–95 percent of wildfires: arson, burning cars, sparks from trains, and, yes, poorly maintained electrical lines. Many of the wildfires are preventable if we educate the public and demand excellence from leadership. If we are supposed to live on this planet, we need to communicate to citizens about how things work, especially the infrastructure of our built environment, which will require individual and collective stewardship.

Kim Abeles, *Enchanted Forest Infrared*, 2012; archival ultrachrome print of Newport Beach, California, model trees, metal roots, 73 x 12 x 12 inches

Sitting with the Chicago Stump

—

Ruth Wallen

The stump was huge, more than three times my height. The rippling wood flared out at the base, almost like a thick mane of flowing hair. I approached these remains, circumambulating them three times, as one would a Buddhist stupa. For their age alone this stump merited veneration. Before their demise, the tree that once stood here was estimated to have been 3,200 years old.

The interpretive sign nearby stated that it would have taken eighteen men with arms outstretched to encircle the "Chicago tree," as it was called. The sequoia was cut down at considerable expense a hundred and thirty years ago and shipped off to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 to prove that such a large tree existed. In order to ship, it had to be cut into many pieces and reassembled. Fair goers weren't convinced, calling the reassembled tree the "California hoax.""

After circumambulating three times, I sat down and exhaled, sharing my breath with this immense stump that no longer respired, taking in the tree's presence. This tree was felled so long ago, but yet their ginormous base was still here, encircled by ferns. I inhaled, as deeply as I dared under the clear, bluish, but smoky, sky.

I had debated making the trip. My worry about Covid-19 abated when I learned that the campground bathroom doors were kept open, only to be replaced by a concern about air quality from the spate of northern California wildfires ignited by lightning strikes. Day by day I kept hoping that by the time of my departure these fires would be under control. However, my drive through the Central Valley passed by mile after mile of almond and fruit trees suffocating in the still, thick, impenetrable air. By the time I entered Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park, I had climbed above some of the smoke, but it was never far behind.

Fires had been here as well. The morning's drive went past dead trees, barren trunks and branches streaked with black. The underbrush was thick with ceanothus and other shrubs that return after fire. An interpretive panel referred to the "McGee fire" in 1955, but what I saw was more recent. On my return home, research revealed that the Rough Fire had burned through this area five years ago, in 2015.

So here I sat, letting my thoughts drift into space. How could I be present to this massive form? This tree, or this reminder of a tree, had stood for over 3,000 years. Imagine the rise of the Anasazi and their cliff dwellings in the Southwest. The Anasazi didn't begin to develop farming villages until this sequoia had lived over half of its life, but further south, the Mayans were already cultivating maize, beans, squash and chili peppers when this tree's life began.

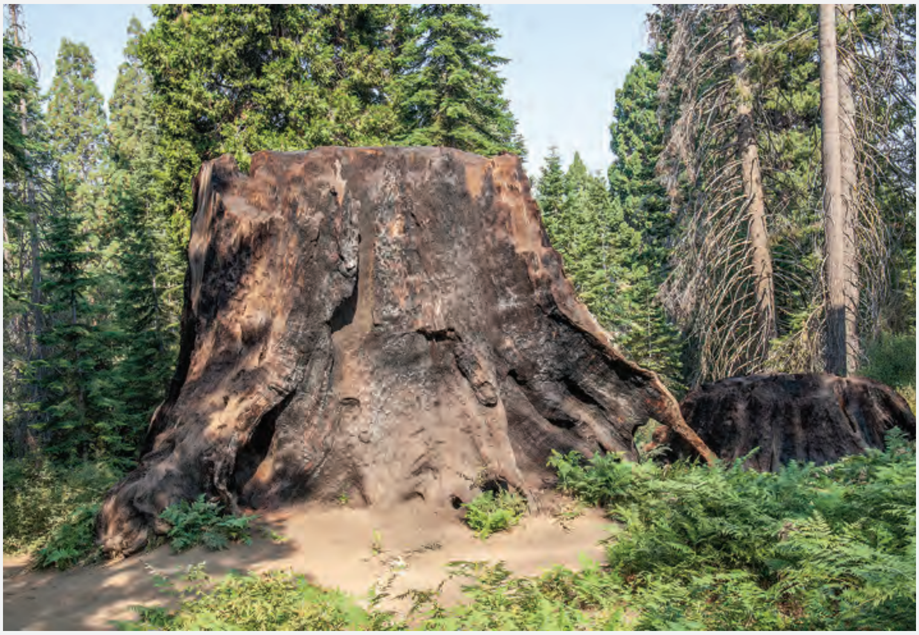
Or imagine the ancestors of the settlers. The goddess culture of the Minoans was still flourishing in Crete during this tree's youth, although warlike patriarchal cultures were sweeping through Europe. Three thousand years ago the Buddha had yet to be born. The Hebrew Bible was being written—the "civilized truth" that the settlers imposed on the native peoples when they came to this land. Even deleting a zero, three hundred years ago was before the establishment of the missions along the California coast, before the native peoples who set periodic fires to clear the brush and aid in the growth of food sources and the germination of redwood seedlings would have encountered Europeans. By two hundred years ago, tales of cruelty of the mission life might well have drifted to the sequoia groves.

Then in 1848 gold was discovered in the foothills to the North. The sequoias were "discovered," a few years later, in 1852, when word of these giants rapidly spread to the eastern US and Europe. Time marched quickly after the settler's arrival. Land was privatized. By 1880, when logging commenced here in Converse Forest, home to one the largest groves of sequoias in the world, fellow inhabitants, from the grizzly bears to the native peoples themselves, had disappeared. After three millennia, as the tree came thundering to the ground, time stopped. Death did not come quickly but, torturously, slowly, over the many days that it took to saw through the thick bark and bore into the tree with awls, until the tree was ready to fell.

While those in Chicago may have considered the tree a hoax, the stump has remained here, frozen in time, standing for a hundred and thirty years as a monument to the tree's destruction, while change accelerated in the surroundings. Above the stump, the emerald foliage of cedar and fir gleamed in the sun. But off to the side stood three tall barren trunks. In the forest nearby, the recently dead—the skeletons that had succumbed to the drought and accompanying bark beetles, stood among the living. Indeed, the drought of 2014–2016 is said to have been the worst in a thousand years. It wasn't only diminished rainfall, but rising temperatures that caused the trees to transpire more water, magnifying its lack. Even before

Ruth Wallen, *A Sequoia Holds Many Histories*, 2021; photographic montage, 22 x 49 inches. This montage combines photos of living sequoias and the Mark Twain Stump with historical images of the Mark Twain and Chicago Stumps. Both trees were cut down for exhibition purposes. All historical photos are in the public domain.

Ruth Wallen, *Chicago Stump*, Giant Sequoia National Monument, 2020; photograph, 20 x 30 inches



the trees tumbled, the dried wood was a target for fire, as evidenced in 2015.

The article in the *Los Angeles Times* where I'd learned about the Rough Fire, was headlined, "'Famed Chicago Stump' sequoia threatened by massive California wildfire." Living sequoias lack flammable pitch or resin, and their fire-resistant bark is two feet thick. The article detailed heroic efforts to save vulnerable this stump from the flames that eventually burned 138,053 acres. Fire crews cleared the brush nearby, ringed the tree with fire retardant, put three sprinklers on the stump and wrapped it in fire-resistant reflective foil that wards off radiant heat.

Another article in *National Geographic* deemed the stump "a national treasure." When the whole forest was burning, what was the fixation on preserving this magnificent stump? Was the act of preserving the tree an act of identification, an affirmation of human power, that firemen could save this fetish of grandiosity while the living forest went up in smoke?

After sitting with the tree for some time, I walked up and touched the stump, at first with hesitation, but then letting my hand linger. Was it alright to touch this tree? The stump was not a museum specimen. The damage had already been done. The surface that had looked so hard was surprisingly soft to the touch. Unlike a corpse, the surface was warm. Letting my hand linger, I touched in tenderness and tears.

The stump may have survived previous fires, but a stump is vulnerable, unlike a living sequoia. The same mindset that propelled the settlers to fell the tree is propelling the continued warming of the climate and increasing the likelihood that there will be another conflagration that consumes the stump.

I am grateful that I was able to sit with this stump, this relic to the arc of time, this relic of a being that began their life so long ago, more than a thousand years before the common era. And yet fire, the fire that has become so feared, is necessary for the sequoia's cones to open and the seeds to germinate. The fire that will eventually consume this stump will create the conditions for a new generation of sequoias to grow. Fire will bring new life, that is, if the climate has not changed so rapidly that conditions will no longer be hospitable to growth.

Coda: As I sat with the stump, I thought that the smoke in the air came from the coastal redwoods burning to the North, unaware that another fire was already burning in Sequoia National Forest to the South. The fire was kept relatively small for weeks, but days after my return home, it began to engulf the forest, eventually burning through several sequoia groves. If ten percent of the Sequoia's crown is spared, it can survive. However, this fire burned so hotly that entire crowns went up in flames. Not only have the sequoias experienced the most severe drought of a millennium, but perhaps the hottest conflagrations as well. In less time than it took the settlers to fell a single tree, the fire is estimated to have burned ten to twelve percent of all living sequoias.

Growing Air

—

Sant Khalsa

The inland communities of Riverside and San Bernardino have long suffered from the worst air quality in the United States. Situated east of Los Angeles, the region experiences the highest level of ozone pollution and second worst year-round particulates in the nation. The life-threatening pollution is due to a large population, car culture, wildfires, and an industrial economy incompatible with the sunny climate, stagnant weather, and bowl-like topography.

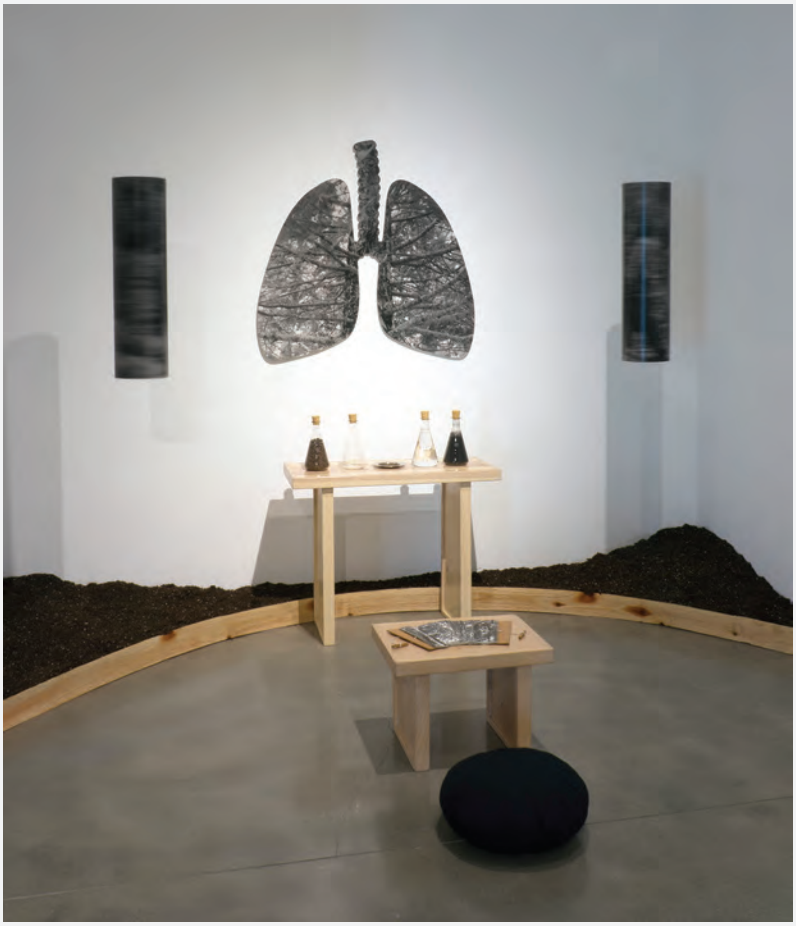
In 1992, I was invited by curator Edward Earle and guest curator and artist Kim Abeles to produce new work for the thematic group exhibition *Smog: A Matter of Life and Breath* at the California Museum of Photography (CMP) at the University of California, Riverside (UCR). At the time, my art practice focused on water issues in Southern California and climate change (what we then referred to as global warming). I had yet to begin to investigate air quality and forest issues in my region seriously.

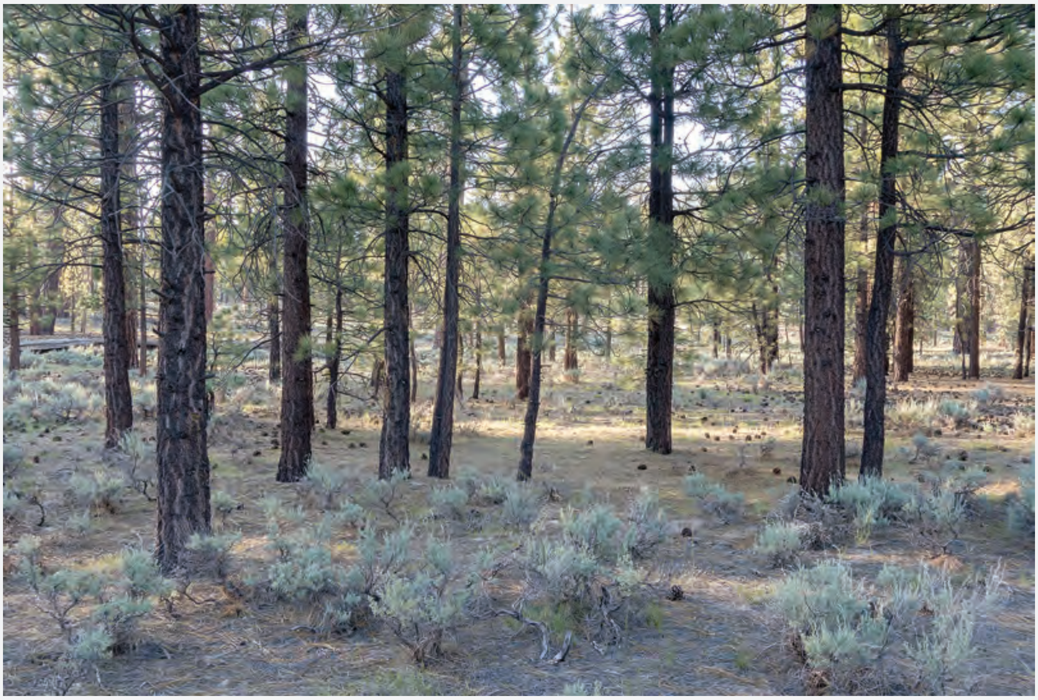
Each artist in *Smog* was paired for collaboration with a research professor at the UCR Statewide Air Pollution Research Center. I had the great fortune to work with the plant pathologist Dr. Paul R. Miller, "whose pioneering and far-reaching research proved that ozone was the main cause of forest dieback in California." I visited and photographed the pine trees on Miller's research site at Strawberry Peak Lookout in the San Bernardino Mountains of inland Southern California, where he monitored the most smog-damaged trees in the United States. Witnessing the impact of ozone pollution on the stand of trees resulted in creating the photo wall installation, *S.O.S.: We are killing trees; therefore, we are killing ourselves* (1992). Nine small photographs of the weakened pine tree branches barely covered with needles are printed on square and rectangular panels to form a visual statement, representing the International Morse Code signal, S.O.S. The silent distress signal draws the audience closer to view the intimate images of the dying trees. The photo piece is accompanied by text describing Miller's findings that predicted bark beetle infestation and devastating forest fires in the future, which unfortunately transpired a decade later.

During a meeting with Miller, I asked him "what was the best thing I could do as an individual to positively impact air quality in the Inland Empire?" He said, "plant trees." In response, I planted hundreds of ponderosa pine seedlings as a volunteer with the National Forest Service in Holcomb Valley north of Big Bear Lake during the 1992 Spring planting season. Native ponderosa pine was selected, propagated, and germinated locally because of their resilience to

right: Sant Khalsa, *The Sacred Breath*, 1992; installation (Photo of MOAH Lancaster Installation, 2018)

below: Sant Khalsa, *Holcomb Valley (Ponderosa pines planted in 1992)* from *Growing Air*, 2017; archival pigment print





drought and fire. Also, on May 1, 1992 (during the Los Angeles riots), four of my CSU San Bernardino New Genres students, Ross Chambers, D'Arcy Curwen, Michael Morehead, and Meikan Prado joined me, each planting one hundred ponderosa pine seedlings. Holcomb Valley had been decimated by gold mining, clearcutting and cattle raising during the 1860s goldrush. The goal of the reforestation project was to improve air and water quality and return balance to a fragile and vital ecosystem in the Santa Ana Watershed.

My planting experiences were physically labor-intensive yet emotionally profound and cognitively transformative, inspiring the site-specific installation *The Sacred Breath* (1992) for the Smog exhibition at the CMP. The installation has been reconfigured for several museum exhibitions since, including the Museum of Art and History (MOAH) in Lancaster (2018), California, and the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe (2021). *The Sacred Breath* is a meditation environment, which focuses on the interdependence between human beings and trees and provides the participant with an experience of "the breath" as a life-giving gift from forests. The lung-shaped photographic altarpiece of a tree and branches resembles the human bronchi, connecting our bodies with forests, the lungs of the earth. On the altar below are ponderosa pine seeds and chemistry flasks filled with the essential life elements of earth, air, water, and (charcoal for) fire. Positive affirmations for trees (i.e., grow trees, save trees, protect trees, respect trees) are contained within the constantly turning prayer wheels covered with images of healthy forests and hanging on both sides of the altar. A handmade photographic prayer book depicting a wide variety of trees with the words inhale and exhale guides visitors through a breath meditation. The sound of wind and breathing fills the air.

The life-changing experience of planting a forest has inspired numerous photo-based works about trees, forests, air quality, watersheds, and climate change over the past three decades. Typical to my practice, photographs resulted from my observations of young trees to ancient forests, clearcutting and regenerative nurse trees, rainforests, wildfires and the aftermath. Additional sculptural and installation works have included Stand and Capsules (both in collaboration with Charles Morehead), *Trees and Seedlings, and the Growing Air (Prayer Wheel)*.

I returned to the site of the seedling plantings for the first time twenty-five years later to find a magnificent and healthy forest of 6–8 inch diameter, 30–40 foot high ponderosa pine trees. Once the site of greed, destruction, and death, Holcomb Valley has been restored to a shared space of life, vitality, and beauty. The young forest is storing and using carbon to produce oxygen required for living beings to breathe over many lifetimes. While there, I saw many species of birds and wildlife and people experiencing the forest as a site for individual reflection and family interactions. For my current *Growing Air* project, I am spending time in the Holcomb Valley forest, conducting creative research, and producing works that respond to this unique and complex environment. I am drawn to both the visible and hidden mysteries we seek to understand about trees and their communal lives. I feel a deep connection with the place and recognize the power and sacredness of the trees. I walk through the young forest attuned to the life force surrounding me and the expanding mycelium networks beneath my feet. I know that the trees are aware of my presence, and I express gratitude for all they give us.

The realization that I am nature has transformed my life and art. The water that flows through every cell of my body is the same water in my local streams and aquifers. I breathe because of my symbiotic relationship with trees and the flora in the earth and oceans. Native tree planting in our communities and support for worldwide efforts to plant, maintain and preserve forests is critically essential to sustain the breath of life on our planet and slow and hopefully stop climate change. Individually and together, our conscious and healing actions can make all the difference.

Equal Opportunity Eating in the Apple Orchard

—

Susan Leibovitz Steinman

Underlying Beliefs

There is no separation among ecological, social, economic, and political needs. All living systems are interconnected and can be visualized as a web; so are human-invented systems. It is impossible to address one without affecting others.

One blatant visual barometer distinguishing *haves* from *have-nots* is an abundance vs. scarcity of street trees. Another barometer measures global disparity in accessing healthy food. I have been working since 1989 to use art skills to solve and educate others to solve the twinned crises of forest destruction and starvation—not just human starvation, but all living things denied habitat and access to healthy food production. It has become increasingly critical to work collaboratively and collectively, across disciplines and across communities, to seek corrective solutions. Here artists can play an essential role in outreach, educate and demonstrate ecological strategies for healthy survival.

Salvaged Trees

Along with found household detritus, my earliest ecoart projects and sculptures incorporated locally salvaged dead tree limbs symbolizing the loss of urban and rural forests—those essential, ecologically diverse living habitats endangered by relentless urban expansion.

The Tree Museum, 1990
City of Berkeley Art Windows

An urban street-front installation titled *The Tree Museum* was inspired by singer/songwriter Joni Mitchell's Big Yellow Taxi; "Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got til it's gone. Pave paradise put up a parking lot.... Take all the trees and put them in a tree museum and charge the people a dollar and half just to see'em." Disconnected tree limbs hung from the ceiling and lay stacked on the floor. An adjacent space had a more positive message, an ad encouraging support for the city recycling center. Cardboard recycling boxes were filled with green glass bottles. A redwood tree grew out of each box.

Sukkah, 1991
Judah Magnes Museum, Berkeley

I was commissioned to build a large sculptural outdoor sukkah for Judah Magnus Museum. Walls were constructed of salvaged tree limbs, creating an abstract effect of a horizontally unfolding forest. In Judaism, Sukkot celebrates the cyclical miracle of harvest. The Sukkah is a small one room shelter with no roof. Open to the vast daytime sky and nighttime galaxies; it frames one's minute relationship to the universe. It also refers to Tikkun Olam –"world repair," the Jewish tenet of each person's responsibility to repair "the hole in the world's roof." Historically it is built beside a field to be harvested. Prayers give thanks for the harvest and ask for rain for next year's harvest. For *Sukkah*, at the Judah Magnes Museum, I fixed an old wooden chair, suitable for a single occupant, to rest among the forest remnants, to contemplate one's time and place in nature. The floor was covered with newspapers in myriad global languages, alluding to Diasporas and also connectivity. The chair faced a small altar at the far end of the Sukkah. The altar displayed an old suitcase, open like a book, filled with topsoil.

For my work, an obvious next step was to incorporate living trees and plants in public installations. Encouraged by the expanding community garden and free food movements, I began to work with already organized community leaders to create living-learning gardens in neighborhoods with few trees and less access to healthy food.

In the early 90s I was employed as an itinerant ecoart teacher in inner-city schools. I met young students who had never seen an orchard, guessed that apples grew on the ground, and innocently thought there were only two kinds of red and green that mysteriously appeared on grocery shelves. I wanted to create communal food gardens and orchards throughout the city and convince them to plant fruit trees as street trees. Anyone would be allowed, even encouraged, to pick fruit to eat. The trees would belong to everyone. Ecologically they would function as urban forests providing cleaner air in neighborhoods with a high incidence of childhood asthma. Socially they would beautify the same neighborhoods, reducing urban blight. These trees would provide easier access to healthy food for all to see and for all to share.

EOE = Equal Opportunity Eating

It took fifteen years for me to realize the concept of *EOE*—a collective name for ongoing food access projects that include community food gardens, public forest food tree gardens. Some important techniques and strategies came from the Permaculture movement. Permaculture practitioners came up with ideas of the urban forest—and planting gardens as Urban Forests. Not planted in rows, permaculture designs enable diverse plants to prosper by sharing nutrients, soil, sunshine, shade, etc. These are strategies I continue to use in my work.

Apple Trees & Seed Biodiversity

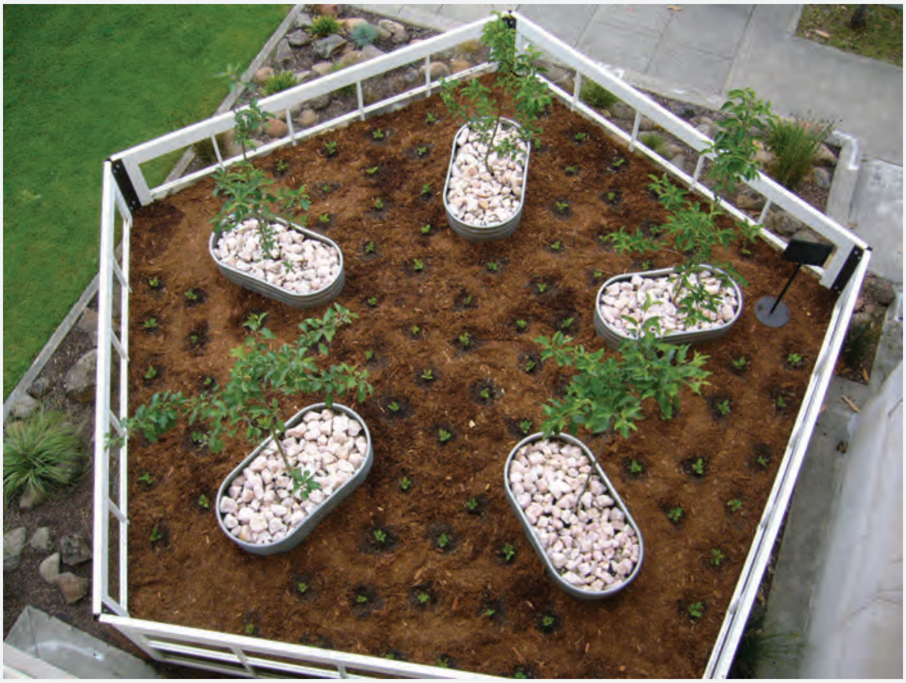
Michael Pollen's 2001 book *The Botany of Desire* was published six years after my first Apple Orchard public project. His scientific storytelling reintroduced me to the complex values of apples and apple trees. Apple trees originated in the wilds of Russia, and their seeds were spread around the top half of the world by birds, animals, and of course, people. Migrants brought the seeds with them as highly prized sources of sweetness and alcohol. All apples have a pentagon-shaped central chamber that holds five biologically diverse seeds. In the wild, apples vary in size, taste and color. Wild apple seeds may produce trees, bushes, and even ground covers. An orchard tree with dependable size, shape, and color can only be produced by cloning. To find a good-tasting wild apple is a matter of mathematical good luck. There is no mystery in a cloned apple tree—it produces the same apple year after year. Branches are cut from the most desired, commercially successful trees and attached to a healthy rootstock base. Growers prefer monocultures as easier to manage, less expensive, and results in higher productivity and efficiency. It is the antithesis of polyculture farming and biodiversity.

The commercial orchard has all the ecological problems of any other monoculture crop. Growing one type of crop at one time on a specific field (a definition of monocropping) eventually upsets the natural balance of soils, depleting essential minerals and nutrients, bacteria, and microorganisms needed to develop soil fertility to avoid diseases and to manage pests. The mono-crop farmer needs a multitude of poisons to protect fruit trees. These same poisons negatively affect birds and other wildlife that depend on trees for food and shelter.

One obvious solution is to plant polycultures. A single wild apple tree will produce hundreds of diverse seed offspring to propagate seedlings. Planting wild fruit trees in permaculture gardens, orchards, and street trees can reintroduce biodiversity and health.

Food For Thought: Urban Apple Orchard I, 1993–1995, San Francisco

Inspired by the permaculture movement, I proposed a community-participatory public art project called *Food for Thought: Urban Apple Orchard* to the San Francisco Art Commission. The installation was a two-year "temporary" project located on Caltrans land along Market Street (the main downtown thoroughfare) under a freeway ramp destroyed by the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake. The orchard contained twelve heirloom apple saplings, each originating from



Susan Leibovitz Steinman,
Sweet Survival, 2006–2009

one of twelve countries whose immigrants brought tree seeds to the U.S. Then, as now, the U.S. legislature was grappling with anti-immigration laws. Here, a pro-immigrant metaphor implied that both apple trees and immigrants are "as American as Apple Pie." Grant money paid art stipends to local students and nearby homeless to help install the project. Each tree was planted in a raised bed of stacked used car tires (rescued from landfill) painted shades of green by the students. Later, resident homeless performed as "art docents," and students became documentarians photographing the project and writing about it. When dismantled, the apple trees were distributed throughout the community—to schools, the church across the street, the nearby Zen center, and a local city park. The essential central strategy for my work is to increase trees in the inner city, especially accessible food trees.

Sweet Survival: Urban Apple Orchard II, 2006–2009
Sonoma County Museum, Santa Rosa CA
curated By Patricia Watts

Sweet Survival was a site-specific installation honoring Sonoma County's historic apple crops (now overrun by vineyards) and the importance of biodiversity for plant and human survival. The Pentagon-shaped garden refers to apple's star-shaped interior seed chambers that hold genetically diverse seeds.

First, an Apple Tasting & Seed Collecting Event was held on a Saturday afternoon in the yard of the Sonoma County Museum. There was a wonderfully diverse collection of apples for visitors to taste. Apples were donated by local organic farmers, backyard growers of antique varietal apple trees, and the historic Luther Burbank Farm. The Farm staff specifically chose to donate what they called "mystery apples" picked from trees planted by Burbank himself as part of his experiments. Every person who tasted a slice of apple would drop its seeds into a large glass jar.

After being cooled down in a refrigerator for two months to mimic winter temperatures, the seeds were delivered to the Santa Rosa Junior College experimental farm, where students propagated about one-hundred "wild" seedlings from the collected seeds.

On Museum grounds, I constructed a pentagon-shaped raised bed garden/orchard, using eleven foot long salvaged French hotel doors. The bed was filled with healthy soil from the County's green recycling plant. Over winter, a crop of nitrogen-fixing greens was planted to enrich the soil. In late Spring, all the saplings and five control commercial apple trees were planted. Visitors could see "underground" doings (bugs, worms, growing roots) through French glass doors. All prospered and grew. Upon dismantling, the wild saplings were distributed to local gardens, schools, and farms.

Sweet Survival's goal was to attract and educate curious passersby, Museum visitors, and the broader County community. Its mission was to demonstrate the importance of biodiversity in trees and all life.

Wild Apples For Jo, 2009
Recology Inc. Resident Artists' Sculpture Garden, San Francisco

Pioneering San Francisco ecoartist and activist Jo Hanson died in 2007. Jo was well known and admired in the Bay Area. Hanson was a leading force supporting artists on the SF Art Commission and the prime creator of the "SF Dump" (Recology) Artist-in-Residence Program. She was a great, wise friend to many, a fearless activist, a generous mentor, and in 1996, cofounder (with Estelle Akamine and me) of WEAD, Women Eco Artist's Dialog. In 2009 Recology commissioned me to create a memorial for Jo on the hilltop resident artists' sculpture garden, which I designed and installed when I was among the first group of Resident Artists. Knowing that Jo loved trees and wholeheartedly supported the Apple Orchards, I repurposed the pentagon-raised bed garden first installed at the Sonoma County Museum. Wild apple trees and California native plants were planted there to honor Jo's extraordinary life.

Time with Trees and Plein Air

—

Reiko Goto + Tim Collins

Over the past decade, the Collins + Goto Studio in Glasgow, Scotland, has been interested in the relationship between people, trees and the environment. Why trees? Our relationship with trees is embedded in human history, where trees are utilitarian material, trees are aesthetic objects, and trees are understood as very large living things. Although trees do not have feelings, emotions, and mobility the same way we do, they do have senses that respond to light, temperature, humidity and carbon dioxide. Plein Air is an investigation into how technology could become an extension of our senses, allowing us to notice a tree's response to atmospheric changes. We were interested in aesthetics that is based on lived connectedness.

The idea for the project emerged from a visit to Duke University Forest where long-term research was being conducted on carbon sequestration in a pine forest. They used an incredibly sophisticated sensor array to track physiological changes in that forest over many years. The artwork includes a custom-made portable painting easel holding sensors that allow us to track plant physiology and a computer sound system. Plein Air was developed to reveal the breath of a tree, the rhythms of photosynthesis and respiration. We work with one tree, one leaf at a time. The instrument lets us hear sensor data as the tree's physiology changes with atmospheric conditions. The last ten years of work involved collaboration with Chris Malcom on the software/sound component, Dave Russ on the sensor hardware systems, and Georg Dietzler, who has produced international exhibitions of the work and was the lead on the development of the vinyl record **[fig. 1]**. In addition to this individual tree exploration, Collins + Goto Studio concurrently conducted extensive deep mapping and studio work on the ancient Caledonian Pine Forests of Scotland. Here in this limited space, we offer a bit of insight into research and dialogue that informed the iterative development of Plein Air. We talk about scientific tools and a sense of lived connectedness. You can learn more about the project here: collinsgotostudio1.bandcamp.com/album/plein-air-sylva-datum-musica

Context

In Western art history, artists have been experimenting with different ways to understand trees and nature. Some artists have used drawing, painting, or other methods of reflective observation to observe trees; other artists have extended their perceptual abilities to understand nature with technological devices. Technological interventions such as photographs, film,

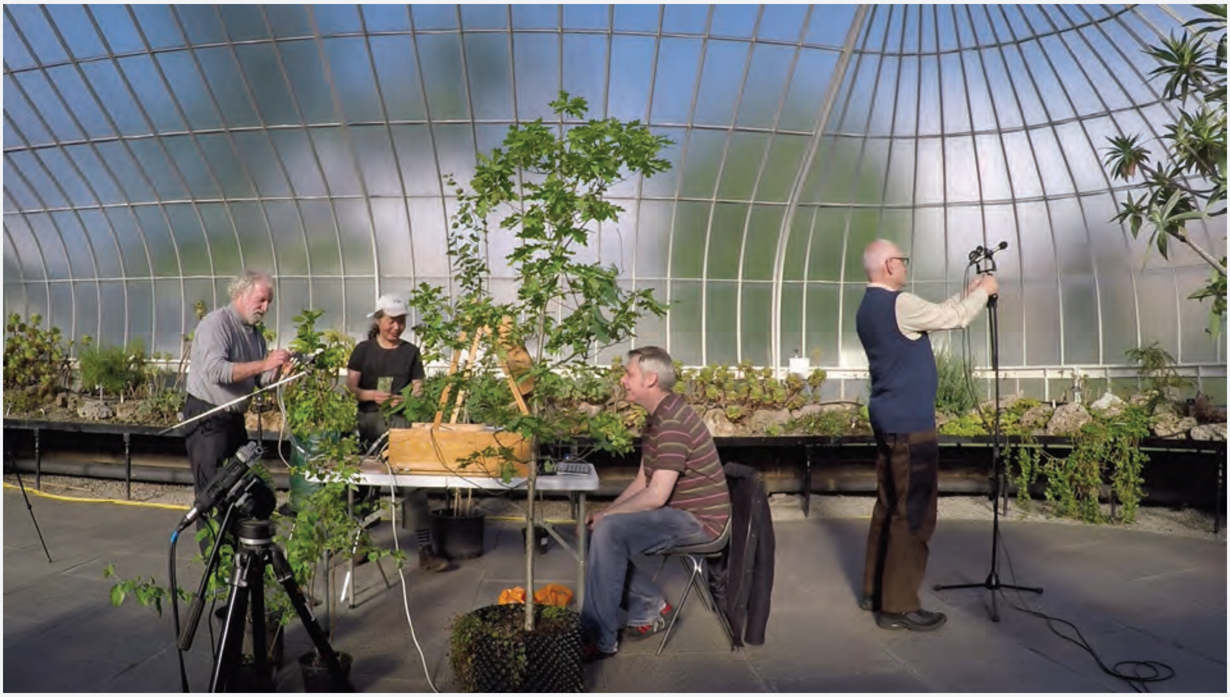


fig. 1: The Plein Air team at the Kibble Palace, Glasgow Botanic Gardens. Left to right: Tim Collins, Reiko Goto, Chris Malcom and Georg Dietzler. 2017. C+G Studio photo.

video, computer, and digital media can capture and reveal nature differently from how we see it normally. The work is not without critical historical references. Teresa Castro provides a view of cybernetics and ideas about plant sentience in the 1970s that informs this kind of artwork in a recent issue of *Antennae*.[1]

At one point, we contacted Professor Yuji Dogane at Kyoto University of Art and Design. He is a biologist and media artist who worked with Mamoru Fujieda, a sound composer, and Masaki Fujihata, a robotics artist, for twenty years. Their mutual interest was focused on how art could express the way plants perceive the world differently from humans. In the interview, Dogane talked about how his approach was related to Japanese spirituality. He said, “In Kyoto, there are many words and traditions that link culture and nature, that remind us of our spiritual relationship to our ancestors, places and things.” We asked him how this was embodied in his work?

> Planting, taking care of, and living with the plant. More specifically placing the plant in the pot. By doing this activity people gain some kind of feeling with their hands instead of thinking. Acting is before thinking...If we cultivate plants in the natural features of the region, taking care of, living, dying, spending time and exchanging, we will understand many things.

Taking care of plants seems to rely on physical, inner and outer perceptions. I (Reiko) am fascinated by this basic relationship with living things as a spiritual engagement. It corresponds to our interest in Plein Air the desire to find an empathic relationship with trees. Relying on technological intervention, wires, sensors, and a computer adds another level of depth to our aesthetic engagement with nature.

After visiting Dogane in Kyoto, we had an idea of where we wanted to go see a specific Shin-boku (神木), a sacred tree within the Shinto tradition. There was a large tree in the middle of a vast rice field near my uncle’s house in Mie prefecture. I had seen the tree many times while traveling on the train between Isewakamatsu and Suzuka. It was a thousand-year-old camphor tree (Cinnamomum camphora) growing in the middle of a rice field **[fig. 2]**. The area was marked with stone lanterns, and the tree was celebrated with a shime-nawa (しめ縄), a braided rice straw rope used for ritual purification--part of the worship of ancestors and belief in natural spirits. The stone lanterns and the straw rope symbolize the tree as shin-boku. In this case, it was a little odd because usually, a shin-boku could be seen amongst shrines and temples. Later on, I found a kan-nushi (神主), a Shinto priest in the area, to ask about the absence of the shrine. He said the original Mori (杜), the shrine had been removed and rebuilt in a different area and only the tree remained.

We met two men who came every day to spend time with the tree in the middle of the rice field. One of them was ill. He came to pray for his health. He also told us he used to work at an oil refinery in the port of Yokkaichi. The other was an old farmer. He came to play a harmonica to the tree. Both men told us the tree was a focal point for many other local people to go across the vast rice field. The farmer said, "Look at the branch. It is very big. It gives us a lot of energy. This is nature, something we cannot create."

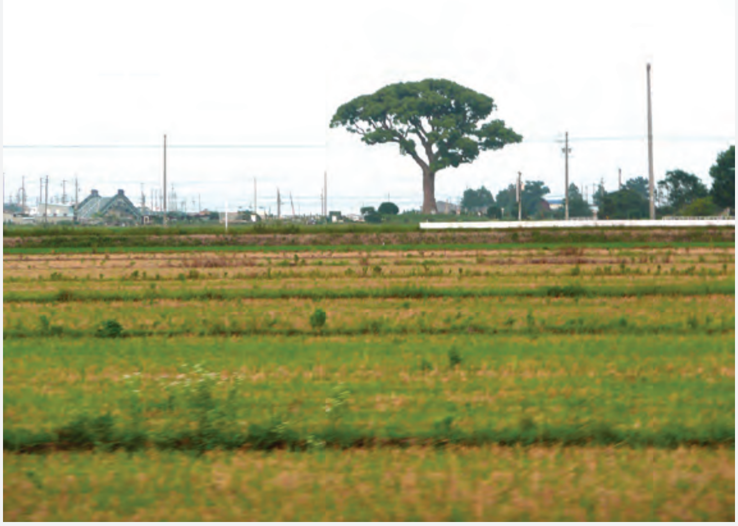
The religious customs in Shinto and Buddhist traditions are so embedded in Japanese culture that the everyday act of the men visiting the tree is not considered unusual. By repeating this experience, I assume the men were projecting their emotions onto the tree. I romanticized their relationship with the tree but what struck me was how those men kept visiting the tree. The prayer and posture were sincere. They did not have a plant physiological system like Plein Air. However, by spending time at that place and comparing their day-to-day experience of the tree, the weather differences, their own health conditions, and talking to other visitors, the men and the tree are clearly interrelated through this intimate, sustained, and repeated experience. Tim and I had respect for these men and their empathic relationship with the tree through an intimate relationship with it over time.

This intimate relationship is at the heart of Plein Air; to spend time listening to the breath of a living tree.

Note

1. Castro, T., (2020) "The 1970s Plant Craze." *Antennae*, 2020 Autumn, Pp. 173–189. Chicago: Antennae Project

Excerpted from Reiko's 2012 PhD, thesis: *Talking Tree: Won't You Take a Minute and Listen to the Plight of Nature?;* On the Edge Research, Gray's School of Art, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland



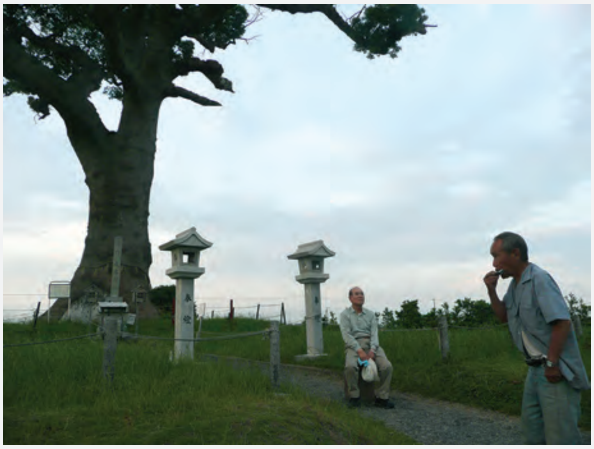


fig. 2: Nago no Ōkusu, a thousand-year-old camphor tree in Nago, Mie, Japan. C+G Studio photo.

Bonnie Ora Sherk
(1945–2021)

A Living Library (A.L.L.) & Think Park Nature Walk

On August 8, 2021, we lost an ecological art pioneer who began her art career in San Francisco over fifty years ago. Bonnie Ora Sherk was an artist and educator who developed place-based, transformative, and resilient landscapes, planting thousands of California native trees and plants while engaging the public meaningfully. The Islais Creek Watershed, the largest in the Bay Area, was her palette where she conceived and executed dozens of time-based works, including her *Sitting Still* series, *Portable Parks* series, *Crossroads Community (the farm)*, and ongoing projects with *A Living Library*. Her goal was to expand these projects throughout the entire Watershed. The work also resulted in habitat restoration, including flood mitigation and systematic impacts benefiting climate stability.

“Since 2002, I have been creating *A Living Library; Think Park Nature Walk* that is interconnecting eleven communities in San Francisco’s largest Watershed, through planting native trees and understory plants with interpretive signage, using Watershed as a natural framing device interlinking schools, parks, public housing, streets, other open spaces. This framework creates multi-benefit, Funcshuional Art, and resilient landscapes that also help mitigate extreme flooding from underground creek system/storm-water surges, as well as integrating community/school education programs, including green skills job training, re-attracting diverse wildlife species through habitat restoration, providing relief from heat island effects, reconnecting communities where freeways have severed them, making them safer and more accessible, improving air quality/quality of life for all species, including beautification, and other triple-bottom-line community/ecological benefits.”

Bonnie Ora Sherk has exhibited internationally in museums and galleries, including at the Venice Biennale, and published globally, in art books and journals.

alivinglibrary.org

Bonnie Ora Sherk, *Bernal Heights Living Library & Think Park Nature Walk*, Alemany Farm, San Francisco, 2002–present

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Online exhibition: ecoartspace.org/exhibitions

Front cover: Carol Paquet, Shrouded Green, 2020 (detail)
Back cover: Laura Gorski, Sprout in the Encounter, 2021 (detail)

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ecoartspace operates from the unceded lands of the Tewa people in Santa Fe, New Mexico (USA), called O'ghe P'oghe, which means White Shell, Water Place. We want to acknowledge and express gratitude to all Indigenous people who have lived in relation with the earth, including the trees, animals, air, soil, and water for thousands of years here on Turtle Island and beyond. We acknowledge that extractive, exploitive colonialism continues to threaten the survival of all species and that ancestral Indigenous knowledge needs to be recognized and preserved.

Many of the artists included in *Embodied Forest* are dedicated to documenting and representing trees and forests in their art practice; some have recently come to the subject. One hundred and ninety-one ecoartspace members applied to the call for artists, and ninety were selected by guest juror Lilian Fraiji, curator of LABVERDE based in Manaus, Brazil.

Countries represented by seventeen of the *Embodied Forest* artists outside the United States include Brazil, England, Sweden, Australia, Belgium, and Germany. The range of topics addressed is vast, including insects, breath, wildfires, birds, fungi, logging, growth rings, transpiration, mycorrhizal networks, canopy shyness, the cellular tissue of trees, forest immersion, reciprocity, trees as memories, rights of nature, trees as witnesses of history, colonial and capitalist extraction/white supremacy, the sonification of trees, symbiotic relationships, trees as bioindicators, tree as medicines, conservation and restoration, beetle infestations, migrations of tree habitat, Indigenous knowledge, and cultural burns.